USA $12.99 EUROPE €11.99 2018#4 WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM

NEW IN CHESS

READ BY CLUB PLAYERS IN 116 COUNTRIES

‘Mediocre’ Magnus
easily the best in Gashimov Memorial

Reuben Fine
A unique double talent

Challenger Caruana
tops Carlsen in Grenke Classic

Judit Polgar
Time-trouble

Vincent Keymer (13)
Ahead of 50 GMs

Matthew Sadler
Misha Tal’s Magic

Just Checking
Daniil Dubov

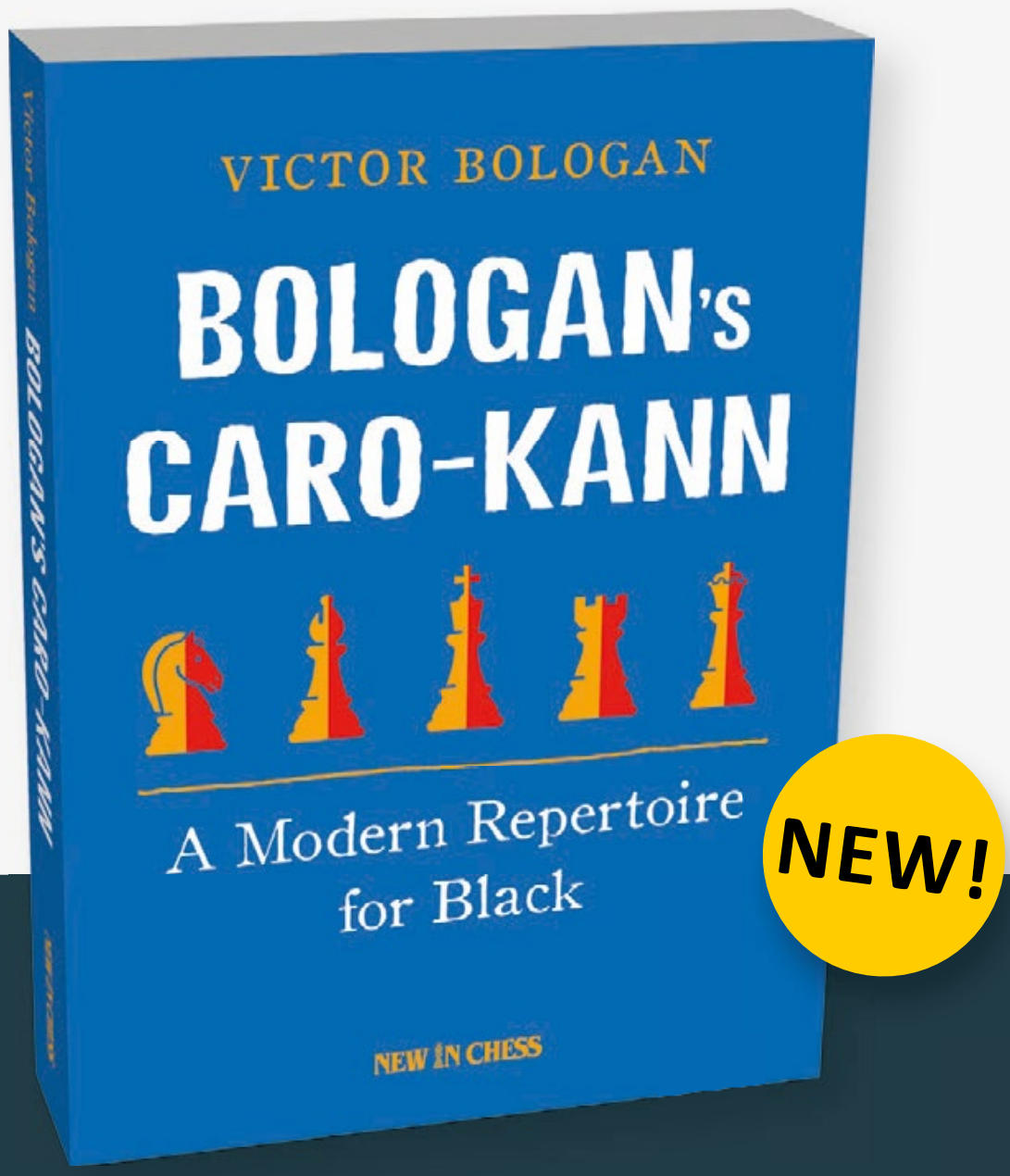
Nigel Short:
Why I am running for FIDE President

US Champion
Sam Shankland
‘I have dreamt of this moment for as long as I can remember’

THE BLITZ WHISPERER:
HOW TO BEAT (MUCH) STRONGER OPPONENTS

ISBN 978-90-5691-783-8

With lots of new ideas and resources



Elite players such as Hikaru Nakamura and Fabiano Caruana are proving that the ‘drawish’ reputation of the Caro-Kann no longer holds in modern chess. In many lines Victor Bologan provides – as he has done in his other recent opening books for New In Chess – two options to handle the Black position.

Bologan’s explanations are accessible for a wide range of players and he provides the reader with a thorough grounding in the strategic and tactical motifs. After reading and studying this book you are bound win many exciting games with Bologan’s Caro-Kann!

paperback | 352 pages | €29.95 | available at your local (chess)bookseller or at newinchess.com | a NEW IN CHESS publication

CHESSBASE ACCOUNT PREMIUM

CHESSBASE ACCOUNT:
Access the world of ChessBase from wherever you are 24/7!

PLAYCHESS
The ultimate chess experience

LIVE DATABASE
Professional research: 8 million games online

MY GAMES CLOUD
Your one-stop cloud storage area

FRITZ ONLINE
Your browser-based chess engine

VIDEOS
Private Masterclasses

OPENINGS
Welcome to modern opening preparation

TRAINING
Calculate, sacrifice, mate

ENGINE CLOUD
Top engine on the best hardware

LET'S CHECK
Knowledge is mate: 200 million analyses

CB NEWS
The world-renowned chess news portal

ENDGAME TURBO 5
ON USB STICK

Get the Endgame Turbo 5 and turn your chess program into an endgame genius! Simply plug the stick into the computer. No need for an installation on the hard disk. Superfast access via USB 3.0!

There was never anything like that from ChessBase!

With the new Endgame Turbo 5 there is for the first time a ChessBase product on a USB stick. The new Turbo offers perfect endgame analyses and a mighty gain in performance for your engines in the endgame. Thanks to the economical data format (Syzygy) the Endgame Turbo 5 is faster and includes clearly more types of endgame than the previous versions. The volume of the endgame databases is 128 GB (on the USB stick) – that represents the contents of 27 DVDs!

For all endgame positions with 3, 4 and 5 pieces, as well as for 143 of the most important 6-piece positions the new Turbo 5 has the precise evaluation of the position for you to access immediately. So with the programs ChessBase 13/14, Fritz 15/16, Komodo 11 and Houdini 6 you can establish in no time at all whether an endgame position is won, lost or drawn and what the path to the draw or win looks like. Over and above that, the programs Komodo Chess 11 and Houdini 6 also use the knowledge of the Endgame Turbo during their analysis of endgames with more than six pieces, e.g. whenever during their calculation of variations it is possible to evaluate liquidations into endgames with six or fewer pieces. Thus these engines more quickly reach more precise and reliable results and clearly improve your playing strength.

Using Endgame Turbo 5 is childishly easy: plugging the USB stick into the computer automatically starts an initialisation which only takes one or two seconds. Done and dusted! From then on your Fritz or ChessBase program is, in combination with the Endgame Turbo 5 USB stick, a real endgame genius! There is no need to install the endgame databases on the hard disk.

Endgame expert
Dr. Karsten Müller:

"Previously the analyses of complicated endgames were often mysterious. The rise of the computer shone light into many dark corners. But not till Tablebases could all the beauty and incredible depth of the royal game be shown to full advantage. The new Endgame Turbo 5 is indispensable for the decryption of complex endgames and also for my own analyses!"

ENDGAME TURBO 5 ON USB STICK **179,90 €**

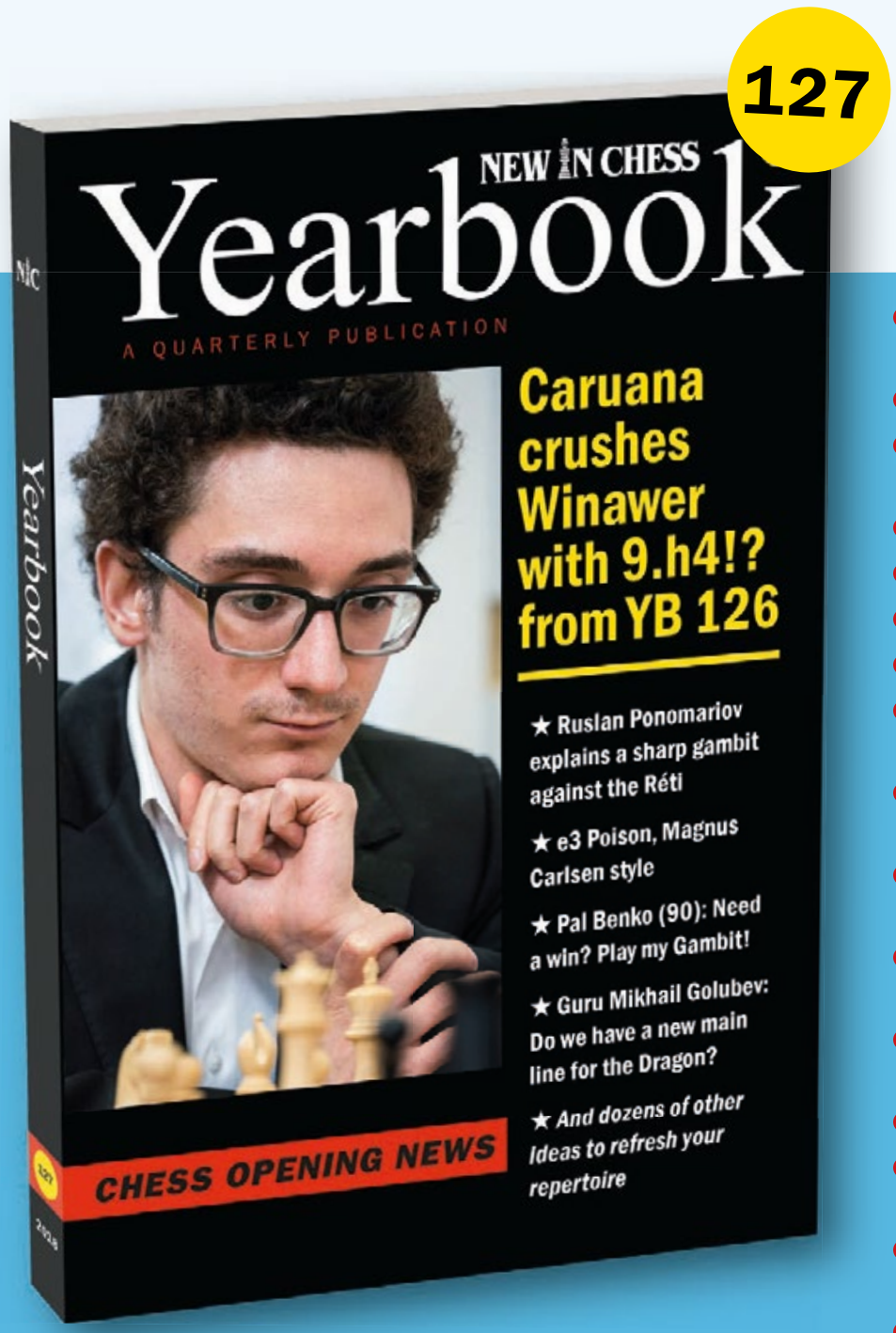
ChessBase GmbH · News: en.chessbase.com · CB Shop: shop.chessbase.com
CHESSBASE DEALER: NEW IN CHESS · P.O. Box 1093 · NL-1810 KB Alkmaar
phone (+31)72 5127137 · fax (+31)72 5158234 · WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM

ChessBase

‘There is something about nearly every opening one can think of.’

– *British Chess Magazine*

★ **NEW COLUMN:**
Erwin l’Ami catches remarkable correspondence games novelties


127
NEW IN CHESS
Yearbook
A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION
Caruana crushes Winawer with 9.h4!? from YB 126
★ Ruslan Ponomariov explains a sharp gambit against the Réti
★ e3 Poison, Magnus Carlsen style
★ Pal Benko (90): Need a win? Play my Gambit!
★ Guru Mikhail Golubev: Do we have a new main line for the Dragon?
★ And dozens of other ideas to refresh your repertoire
CHESS OPENING NEWS

With answers to urgent questions such as:

- **What novelty did Fabiano Caruana find in Yearbook 126 to crush Aleksandr Lenderman in the Hook Winawer?**
- **How did AlphaZero refurbish the Polugaevsky Gambit?**
- **What does Ruslan Ponomariov think of the sharp 6...♘c6 gambit in the 1...d5 and 2...c6 Réti?**
- **Why did Pal Benko take up 3...b5 in the Benoni?**
- **What is really going on in the 10.♕e1 Dragon today?**
- **Why does Magnus Carlsen at occasion play 1.e3 ?**
- **Does 9.♘xe5 bust the King’s Indian with 7...c6 ?**
- **Where is White’s advantage after Vidit Gujrathi’s 9...♗g4 in the Scotch Four Knights?**
- **Is Ivan Cheparinov’s 12.♘xf7 in the Moscow Gambit back in business?**
- **What is behind Fabiano Caruana’s fabulous 5...♕d7 novelty in the Steinitz Petroff?**
- **Does Vladimir Kramnik’s 18...♖h4-rook sac in the Botvinnik Slav still stand up to scrutiny?**
- **Is there a solution for White to Vladimir Kramnik’s brilliant 7...♖g8 move in the Anti-Berlin?**
- **Is the Alekhine Defence playable in correspondence chess?**
- **Is 8...♖e8 in the Accelerated Dragon just a bullet weapon, or more?**
- **What are the points of Fabiano Caruana’s 12...♘c7! novelty in the Marshall Petroff?**
- **When can White sac a knight on g5 in the Anti-Berlin? And in the Giuoco Piano?**
- **How did Hikaru Nakamura get caught twice in the Blackburne QGD?**
- **Was Botvinnik right when he claimed that after 8.♖c1 Black cannot play 8...c5 in the Orthodox QGD?**
- **How did Peter Svidler turn the Russian Variation of the Grünfeld on its head?**
- **Why do Magnus Carlsen, Fabiano Caruana and Wesley So all allow 5...♗xb1 6.♕xb1 ♗b4+ in the London System?**

Paperback | 256 pages | € 29.95

Please have a look at the free apps: www.newinchess.com

Get it on Google play

Available on the App Store

ČEZ CHESS TROPHY 2018

DAVID NAVARA vs. DING LIREN

JUNE 12–17, 2018

MICHNA PALACE IN PRAGUE

Come to the beautiful city of Prague to visit the match of grandmasters and to take part in the blitz tournament and in the simul of Ding Liren. (mail to pavel.matocha@gmail.com)

WWW.PRAGUECHESS.CZ/EN

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF THE MAYOR OF PRAGUE 1 ING. OLDRICH LOMECKY

PRAHA 1

CEZ GROUP
GENERAL PARTNER

PRAGUE CHESS SOCIETY

HOTELS

ŠACHOVÝ TÝDENÍK

NEW IN CHESS bestsellers

Strategic Chess Exercises

Find the Right Way to Outplay Your Opponent

Emmanuel Bricard 224 pages - €24.95

Finally an exercises book that is not about tactics. Carefully selected and tested training positions that teach you how to develop the right plan, how to apply strategic principles in concrete positions, how to gain time on the clock by having to calculate fewer variations and how to accumulate advantages in various types of positions.

How Ulf Beats Black

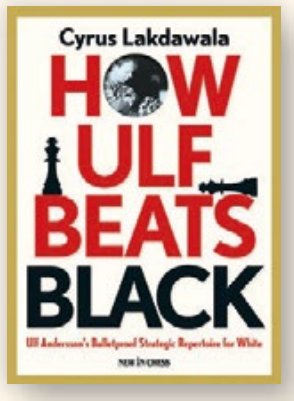
Ulf Andersson's Bulletproof Strategic Repertoire for White

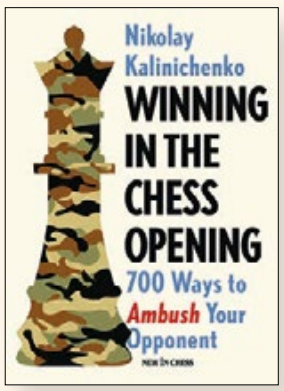
Cyrus Lakdawala 288 pages - €27.95

This repertoire will last a lifetime.

"There is a lot of good stuff to enjoy by exploring the ideas and openings of the Swedish legend."
IM Gary Lane, ECF Newsletter

"Lakdawala has come up with a 'not the usual fare, but definitely worth the detour' type of work. It's instructive, but not too heavy, so will suit all sorts."
GM Glenn Flear, Yearbook 127





Winning in the Chess Opening

700 Ways to Ambush Your Opponent

Nikolay Kalinichenko 464 pages - €24.95

More than just a collection of traps and tricks. Kalinichenko always explains the ideas and plans behind the opening and how play could have been improved.

"Enjoyable, while also making the reader much more aware of where early pitfalls can suddenly spring from."
CHESS Magazine

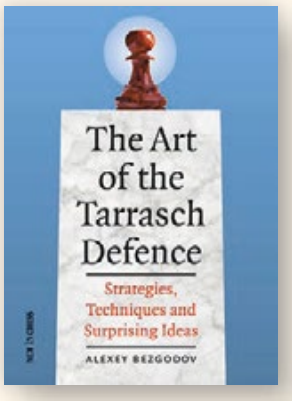
Super Chess Kids

Win Like the World's Young Champions!

Franco Zaninotto 144 pages - €14.95

The bright side of peer group pressure! A new approach in chess improvement for youngsters: instructional material not from old games of ancient masters, but selected from games played in recent under-14 Championships around the world. With more than 100 tests on elementary strategy and tactics.

"A wonderful chess instruction book, very much recommended for all players up to Elo 2000."
IM Dirk Schuh



The Art of the Tarrasch Defence

Strategies, Techniques and Surprising Ideas

Alexey Bezgodov 320 pages - €27.95

"A goldmine of resource (...) brilliantly written."
Michael Mkpadi, ChessHot

"Well suited for all levels of player, but particularly those around 1800-2200, who are looking to learn how classical chess is played."
IM John Donaldson

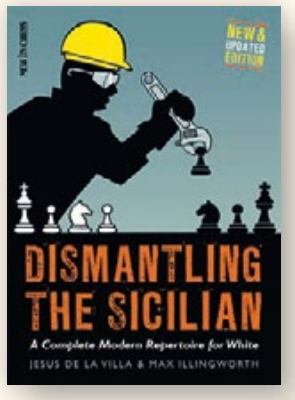
Dismantling the Sicilian – NEW EDITION

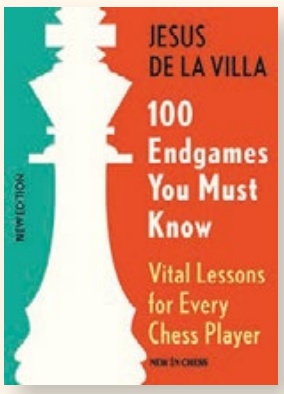
A Complete Modern Repertoire for White

Jesus de la Villa & Max Illingworth 368 pages - €27.95

"Many novelties and improvements on existing theory have been added."
Carsten Hansen, author of The Chameleon Sicilian

"Novelties abound. A high-quality and durable repertoire that has the potential to cause significant theoretical and practical problems."
Paul Hopwood, CHESS Magazine


NEW & UPDATED EDITION
DISMANTLING THE SICILIAN
A Complete Modern Repertoire for White
JESUS DE LA VILLA & MAX ILLINGWORTH



100 Endgames You Must Know

Vital Lessons for Every Chess Player

Jesus de la Villa 254 pages - €22.95

"If you've never read an endgame book before, this is the one you should start with."
GM Matthew Sadler, former British Champion

"If you really have no patience for endgames, at least read *100 Endgames You Must Know*."
Gary Walters Chess

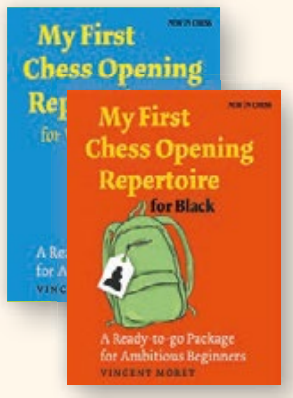
My First Chess Opening Repertoire for White / for Black

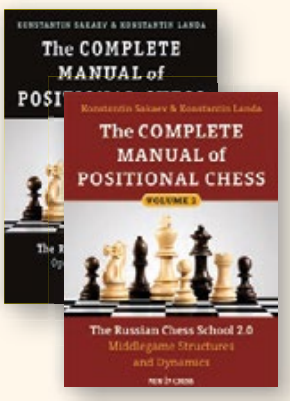
A Ready-to-go Package for Ambitious Beginners

Vincent Moret 240 / 176 pages - €19.95

"I would expect the recommended lines to grow in popularity at club level and they would make an excellent surprise weapon in tournament play too."
CHESS Magazine

"Will definitely improve your rating."
IM Gary Lane, ECF Newletter





The Complete Manual of Positional Chess, Volume 1 and 2

The Russian Chess School 2.0

Sakaev & Landa 320 / 368 pages - €27.95

Probably the most thorough grounding in the history of teaching chess.

"An excellent book, you can't get better than the Russian School of Chess." – *Grandmaster Daniel King*

"A thorough and convincing anthology."
Florian Jacobs, Max Euwe Center, Amsterdam

Play 1...d6 Against Everything

A Compact and Ready-to-use Black Repertoire for Club Players

Erik Zude & Jörg Hickl 288 pages - €22.95

Develop your position with strong standard moves and start effective counterplay. Zude and Hickl provide common sense guidance, explain all typical characteristics and give practical examples.

"Very useful for club players and casual players looking for a well-explained and complete opening repertoire."
Uwe Bekemann, German Correspondence Chess

available at your local (chess)bookseller or at www.newinchess.com

2018#4
NEW IN CHESS

Contents

'I should have started following my intuition much earlier.'

8 Amber chess
A dazzling and enchanting chess set with a price tag of 580,000 euros.

10 NIC's Café
Milos Forman (1932-2018) loved chess and even collected chairs used in world championship matches.

12 Your Move
More correspondence chess (and Nigel Short) and who was that elderly gentleman in London in the 1970s?

14 US Championship
A graphic on the history of one of the great national championships.

15 Fair & Square
Daniel '007' Craig explains sexiness in the movies.

16 The tallest king In St. Louis
Caruana, So or Nakamura, who would be the new US Champion? Well, none of them, as Sam Shankland claimed the title, pocketed $ 50,000 and finally crossed the 2700 mark.

21 Celeb64: Arnold Schwarzenegger

34 Short Stories
Nigel Short explains why he is running for FIDE President.

36 Hat-trick in Shamkir
'Mediocre' play proved good enough for Magnus Carlsen to win the Vugar Gashimov Memorial for the third time (with a 2884 performance).

54 Judit Polgar
Time-trouble is no good, Judit Polgar warns, but can produce fascinating chess.

58 Reuben Fine: Double Genius
He was one of the strongest chess players in the world when he abandoned chess to embark on a brilliant career in psychology.

66 Caruana continued
Only four days after the Candidates in Berlin, Fabiano Caruana sat down to play ... Magnus Carlsen! The American won the Grenke Classic. Vincent Keymer (13) sensationally claimed the Grenke Open.

82 Chess Pattern Recognition
Another exchange sac worth knowing.

84 The Blitz Whisperer
More blitz tips from Maxim Dlugy. Most of the time it's not about pawns.

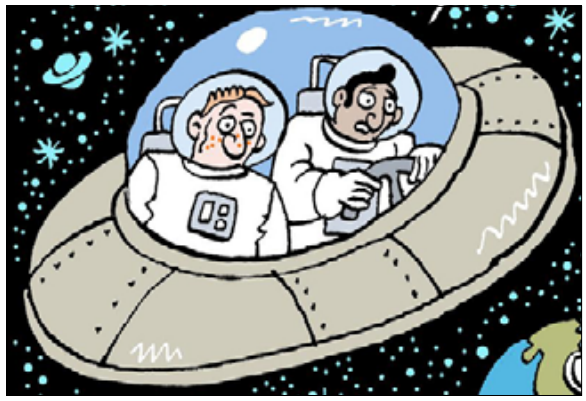
91 Maximize Your Tactics
Find the right moves.

92 Into the lion's den
Hans Ree on a book about Vladimir Kramnik by his former manager Carsten Hensel.

94 Sadler on Books
Who doesn't know that Mikhail Tal was famous for his daring sacrifices? But Matthew Sadler points out that the endgames that arose as a result could be just as fascinating.

100 No Moro Magic in Malmö
But Jan Timman saw that the youngsters did not hide their ambitions at the TePe Sigeman tournament.

106 Just Checking
Where is Daniil Dubov's favourite place in the world?



CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE
Erwin l'Ami, Maxim Dlugy, Daniil Dubov, Anish Giri, John Henderson, Vincent Keymer, Irina Krush, Peter Leko, Dylan McClain, Peter Heine Nielsen, Maxim Notkin, Arthur van de Oudeweetering, Judit Polgar, Joseph Ponterotto, Alejandro Ramirez, Hans Ree, Eric van Reem, Matthew Sadler, Sam Shankland, Nigel Short, Jan Timman, Nikita Vitiugov

Amber Chess

We all remember with fondness that the late Dutch sponsor Joop van Oosterom created the Amber Blindfold and Rapid Chess tournament that ran from 1992 to 2011, named after his daughter Melody Amber. There is no connection, but you will understand that our thoughts briefly wandered back to those exquisite get-togethers of the chess elite on the Cote d'Azur when we came across this stunning chess set made out of amber. Amber is fossilized tree resin and has been admired for its wonderful colours and beauty from antiquity till this day.

This late 17th-century Prussian-made chess set comes from the workshop of Danzig artist Michael Redin. The amber chessmen are transparent and cloudy, with the board part carved and engraved, backed with silver foil, wooden carcass, brass fittings, and the drawer lined with blue silk, with the underside of Augsburg brocade paper. It was intended for Friedrich III of Brandenburg, and then passed through several minor royal courts. In 1758, while in exile in Amsterdam, it caught the eye of Scottish Jacobite general, Lord George Murray (1694-1760) – noted for his 1745 campaign under Bonnie Prince Charlie against Hanoverian 'usurper' King George II – and sent to Blair Castle, the seat of the Murray family in Atholl, Perthshire, as a present for his son, Lord John Murray.

Two years later, his father and uncle died, and he became the third Duke of Atholl, the Chieftain of Clan Murray. Ever since, it has passed through the family lineage. But in 2015, the Murray family decided to sell their historic amber chess set and now it is being sold by Kunstkammer Georg Laue in Munich, and comes with a price tag of 580,000 euros. ■

Milos Forman (1)

Milos Forman, the legendary Czech/American film director, died recently at the age of 86. Many tributes have been paid to his outstanding body of work, particularly noting his two multi-Oscar winning movies, 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest' and 'Amadeus'. Here,

Milos Forman was passionate about chess.

we'd like to tell the tale of Forman's connections with the chess World Champions and the Hollywood chess movie that eluded him.

Forman first got interested in chess after watching his older brother draw with José Raul Capablanca in a Prague simultaneous in the late 1930s. He also spent his 11th birthday (in 1943) watching Alexander Alekhine playing a simul in the Czech town of Nachod. But the media hoopla surrounding the 1972 Fischer-Spassky match had a much more far-reaching effect on him.

Actor and chess enthusiast Peter Falk (he of TV detective 'Columbo' fame) bought the rights to the book of the epic Cold War match in Reykjavik, and in 1977 he approached Forman and asked if he would like to direct it. 'I'll make the film in a minute, but only under one condition,' wrote the director in his 1994 memoir, *Turnaround*. 'Spassky and Fischer must play themselves.' He quickly hired his Czech émigré good friend, GM Lubosh Kavalek, to be a consultant on the movie. 'Boris was not a problem, but Bobby had a lot of questions,' recalls Kavalek. Many months passed, with many conversations between the trio but Bobby... well, although very interested, he still nevertheless had many questions.

To try to help Bobby make his mind up, Forman invited the chess icon on to the set of 'Hair', the 1979 movie he was shooting of the cult Broadway rock musical of the '60s. And just as Fischer was slowly coming round to agreeing to play himself in the movie, the project collapsed over the lengthy delay and the little matter of Fischer's fee – but not from Bobby this time! The actors' union protested that non-actor Fischer was going to be paid a fee of $1 million to play himself in the movie.

Milos Forman (2)

Forman also developed a special chess-related fascination. Kavalek recalls that, in 1981, he accompanied his friend to the Merano World Championship match between Karpov and Kortchnoi. But the film director's focus was fixed not on the players, nor the position on the board, but what they were sitting on. 'Look at the chairs! They must be very comfortable,' chirped Forman to Kavalek. 'Do you think we can get them?' So Kavalek was tasked to negotiate with the chief organizer, Dr. Unterberger, for a price for his friend to buy the chairs.

Karpov's chair somehow collapsed over the years, so the 12th World Champion gave him his chair from the match with Kasparov in New York in 1990. When asked what was his reason for buying the chairs, the film director replied: 'If the greatest chess players were sitting on these chairs and meditated for hours, then the scripts for movies can better be written on them, too.'

In 2007, in Valencia, Milos Forman didn't miss the chance to meet and play Magnus Carlsen.

Wasn't it good (?)

Chess – the musical, scored by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus, based on a brainwave by lyricist Tim Rice – has had a checkered history. A turbulent but respectful West End run was followed, two years later, by a drastically revised Broadway production that sensationally flopped after being

The new West End version of *Chess*. 'A non-ironic yarn about bad-boy Cold War chess players.'

eviscerated by New York Times critic Frank Rich.

Now, after a 35-year hiatus, it's back with a revamped revival West End run at the London Coliseum for English National Opera, directed by Laurence Copper, starring Michael Ball, Tim Howart and Sabrine Aloueche. The reviews are in, and many are betting that the new version will fair no better than the original, with the critics once again totally bamboozled (as happened in the mid '80s) with a plotline revolving around a world chess championship match.

'The plot feels like it could only have come from a very specific era in which a non-ironic yarn about bad-boy Cold War chess players seemed like a viable scenario for a musical', observes Andrzej Lukowski (Time Out, ★★), while Lyn Gardner

(Guardian, ★★) notes that 'the lack of emotional engagement and an absence of tension means you'd find more meaning and have more fun if you stayed home and played tiddlywinks.' Sarah Hemming (Financial Times, ★★) also agreed that 'the story itself is paper-thin, jerked forward in shifts as stiff as moves on a board, and the characters are undernourished. Without a proper dramatic core, this monumental staging runs into stalemate.'

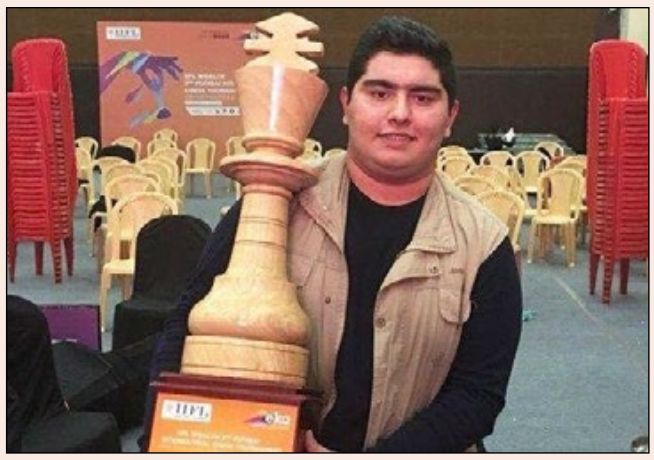
It seems the only saving grace for 'Chess' that the critics readily agreed on, was the music, as the Abba boys certainly knew how to write a catchy tune. 'The best songs are superb, that million-dollar Abba sound elaborated and enriched by Rice's witty contributions,' gushes Mark Valencia, (WhatsOnStage, ★★★★), while Lukowski notes that 'if this was just a concert, it would be a good concert.'

The name is Maghsoodloo

It isn't that many years ago that in Iran, chess was banned under the tyrannical rule of spiritual leader Ayatollah Khomeini, who issued a decree that not only banned chess during the 1979 Islamic revolution, but also forced the country's players underground with their boards and pieces.

But these days, under a more moderate administration, the game is flourishing once again in Iran. They have one of the most professional chess coaching centres in Tehran and have hired in the services of several strong grandmasters for expert training. With it, a mini chess-boom has witnessed Iranian children beginning to rival dominant nations, such as India and China, in several age-group championships.

For the moment their hopes are pinned on Parham Maghsoodloo, the 17-year-old GM who tore up the field at the 2nd Sharjah Masters in the United Arab Emirates, winning the title with the luxury of a round to spare. The rapidly rising teenager dominated from start to finish, turning in an unbeaten score of 8/9

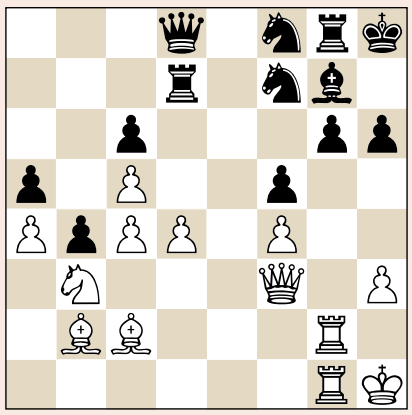


Parham Maghsoodloo is on his way to become Iran's first 2700 player.

that included powerful wins over top-seeds Wang Hao, Vladislav Artemiev and British champion Gawain Jones, as he went on to capture the $15,000 first prize.

And with it, young Maghsoodloo boosted his rating by a further 30 points, setting him on a course to become the first Iranian player in history to break the 2700 barrier and a place in the world's top 100.

Parham Maghsoodloo
Vladislav Artemiev
Sharjah 2018 (4)



position after 41...exf5

42.♗xf5! The start of a finely-executed double sacrifice that takes full advantage of the ♘f7 being short of squares. **42...gxf5 43.♖xg7! ♖xg7 44.d5 ♘g5 45.fxg5 hxg5 46.♕xf5** The rest is now a very effective and efficient clear-up job. **46...♔g8 47.♗xg7 ♖xg7 48.♘d4 ♕e7 49.d6 ♕e8 50.♕f3! ♘g6 51.♘f5 ♘h4 52.♘xg7 ♔xg7 53.♖xg5+ ♘g6 54.♕f5 b3 55.d7** 1-0.

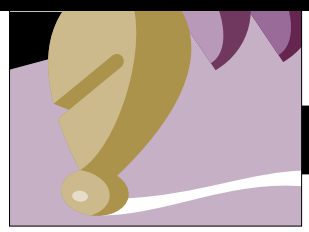
Vishy – the Movie

Aamir Khan, is one of Bollywood's most popular actors. Not only that, but the actor, often hailed as a cerebral superstar, loves the game of chess and doesn't pass up an opportunity to pit his wits against a strong opponent. And one of his favourite opponents has been none other than Viswanathan Anand.

They met back in 2001, soon after Anand first became World Champion, and over the years they have become firm friends, and shared many goodwill visits to schools. 'Yes, he's quite a chess fan', confirmed Anand in a recent interview in the *Hindustan Times*. 'Obviously that helps the sport a lot.' Anand added that he had seen 'Dangal', Aamir's big 2016 film. 'That was very nice, and yeah I've seen a fair amount of his (other) films.'

Will Bollywood star Aamir Khan play Vishy Anand one day? The moustache might have to go.

Anand was also asked about the rumours in India of a potential Bollywood biopic being in the pipeline. 'Well, there's some interest,' he confirmed, 'but I don't know yet what will happen. We'll see.' But quizzed further, Anand did say that if his life was to go on the big screen, he'd want his chess-playing Bollywood actor friend to play the role. ■



Your Move

A mysterious old gentleman

The letter about Ortvin Sarapu in New In Chess 2018/3 reminded me of my own, not dissimilar, experience. In the 1970s, I played on bottom board for IBM in London in a league. In one match I think we played against Marks & Spencer near Oxford Street in central London. My opponent was extremely elderly; he had very thick glasses, two deaf-aids, and he suffered from Parkinson's disease that was so far advanced that he was hardly able to move the pieces reliably.

Being an over-confident, fit young man, I did not take the game seriously. He thrashed me, of course. He then offered me a second game; I accepted and determined to play as seriously as I possibly could. I lasted a bit longer this time. Then he asked me if I could give him a hand in helping him to walk to the nearest Underground station. I was glad to offer an arm on which he leant fairly heavily. As we walked, he told me his life story. He had played chess for the Austro-Hungarian Empire!! That tells you something about his age. He gave me the invaluable piece of advice: always ask yourself, 'What is my opponent threatening?'

I still have to remind myself of that point quite often. He still did a little work for M&S; unfortunately, I have long forgotten his name. But I have not forgotten the experience and the salutary lesson.

Howard Phillips
London, UK

Editorial postscript

As we were curious about the name of the gentleman mentioned, too, we contacted English chess writer Jimmy Adams and he provided the following information:

Howard Phillips's 'extremely elderly' opponent was in fact Michael Duda-Morena, a good strength Polish player who settled in Great Britain after the Second World War and who for three decades represented the John Lewis Partnership (not Marks & Spencer!) in the London Commercial League.

He was born in 1893 and his very varied career included service in the Russian army, performing as an opera singer and, after reaching official retirement age, working as a messenger for John Lewis's London offices and department stores whilst at the same time taking an open university course in archaeology. He was also a journalist and wrote a weekly chess column in the Polish language newspaper *Kronika*.

I also used to work for John Lewis and played regularly on the adjacent board to him in the first team. Duda hardly ever missed a match and was invariably a high scorer. For example, as late as the 1973/74 season, when John Lewis unusually found themselves relegated to Division Two, he made over 90% from 11 games – at the age of eighty!

So, Howard, it was no disgrace to be 'thrashed' by Duda. He never let the ravages of ill health get the better of him and his mind remained sharp until his death in 1980.

Write to us
New In Chess, P.O. Box 1093
1810 KB Alkmaar, The Netherlands
or e-mail: editors@newinchess.com
Letters may be edited or abridged

Grandmaster Martin Landau

I would like point out an error in your Celeb64 story about Leonard Nimoy in New In Chess 2018/3. While many of us are readily familiar with his 3D chess battles with Captain Kirk on *Star Trek*, and he did indeed join the cast of *Mission: Impossible* beginning in its fourth season, your information regarding the episode 'A Game of Chess' is faulty. I remember it well since I have always been a fan of the original MI series.

While your description of the story-line is accurate, the episode was broadcast in the series' second season (in 1968) and the 'grandmaster' was played by the terrific American actor Martin Landau, who passed away last summer. Landau and his wife at the time Barbara Bain were regulars the first three seasons, but left the show in 1969. Nimoy (as Paris) took over for Landau as the 'man of many faces' as you indicated.

Todd Barre
Elmhurst, IL, USA

Industrial strength ear muffs

In his column in New In Chess 2018/2, Nigel Short was rather condemning of Correspondence Chess. For many players this is the ultimate form of blunder-free chess where with guidance from computers, simple and complex blunders are avoided. In a Gibraltar lecture this year Nigel discovered the level of blunders in his Candidates tournament. Top correspondence players obtain wins with subtle positional play, achieving long-term strategic advantages well beyond the horizon of their computer analysis. These games provide great insight into the game of chess rather than the comedy that we saw in the Gibraltar lecture.

In the article Nigel referred to the whirring machinery that he experienced while staying as our guest in 2016 during his Australian tour. Nigel will be interested to know that there are now fifteen computers rather than five. They consider around 10,000,000,000,000 positions per day. We hope that he will visit down under again next year. Should he be able to stay with us I am pleased to advise that we now supply industrial strength ear muffs for our guests. The machinery must continue whirring 24/7.

Gordon Dunlop
Perth, Australia

Brilliant or only natural?

The move 7...♖g8 by Vladimir Kramnik, against Aronian (see New In Chess 2018/3, p.19), was twice invoked by correspondence players, as a bril-

liant novelty, in order to demonstrate the interest of their speciality.

I do not understand their point. First, the move is the immediate first choice of Stockfish 9, so anybody could find it – in a sense, so in fact it justifies Nigel Short's views on correspondence chess. Second, the move is a very natural one, because the idea of playing ...g5 against an early castling of the opponent is well known (see the famous examples Dubois- Steinitz, 1862, Spassky-Petrosian, 1966, or even the recent Carlsen-Topalov, 2015). And as Aronian has just played the weak 7.h3, he really provokes it.

I believe that most experienced players would immediately see the idea, and after some thought be ready to play it. And the most cautious soul might play ...h6 first, also a good move, with the same plan. Some days after the Aronian-Kramnik game, I gave the position to several groups of pupils (who I believed had not seen the game), rated between 1300 and 1900, with the only indication that White's play had not been optimal. Approximately one out of two suggested the idea to play ...g5, beginning with either ...♖g8 (the main proposition, more than one out of three) or ...h6.

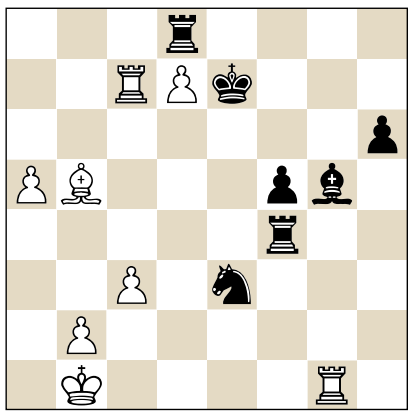
One could argue that Kramnik himself lauded the strength of his 'novelty', but most people know that his statements during post-game press conferences are to be taken with caution... I think that although ...♖g8 had obviously been prepared, it would have been played anyway, not only by Kramnik, but also by any player in 'thinking mode'. Grischuk would never miss it, for example, and Carlsen or Ivanchuk would play it very quickly, because they would immediately identify the specific type of position they are in.

Or am I wrong?

Emmanuel Neiman
Paris, France

The search for the truth

It was with great excitement that I was playing through the fighting game Kramnik-Caruana of the Candidates Tournament in Berlin as it was published in New In Chess 2018/3. Combined with the always lively analysis of Jan Timman this game gave me a lot of pleasure. Even if it is not fair to judge over-the-board play with computer-assisted analysis, the search for the truth was interesting for me, too. The results of my search led to some additions and corrections to the comments given in your magazine.



Kramnik-Caruana
Berlin 2018
position after 38.c3

38...♔d6

1) 38...♔d6 by Caruana was unfortunate because of another reason, too. The computer move 39.♖c6+! wins (first win back the piece): 39...♔e7 (not 39...♔xd7 40.♖xh6++–) 40.a6 ♖xd7 41.♖c8! ♖a7 42.♖e8+ and 43.♖xe3+– (and then convert on the d-file).

39.♖b7 ♖g4 40.♖e1 f4 41.a6 h5

2) 41...h5 appears to be an error. After the forced 41...f3 42.a7 f2 43.♖xe3 ♗xe3 44.♖b8 Black appears to defend very stubbornly with 44....♖g1+! 45.♔c2 ♖g2 46.♗f1 ♗xa7 47.♖xd8 ♖g7 48.♗h3 f1♕ 49.♗xf1 ♖xd7 50.♖h8 ♗e3 51.b4 ♖g7 52.c4 ♖g3 53.♗d3 ♔c7. Perhaps only a lot of CPU heat might demonstrate a White win here.

42.a7 ♖a8 43.b4 h4 44.c4 h3 45.c5+ ♔e5 46.♖b8

3) Objectively, 46.♖b8 by Kramnik cannot be called an error since 46.♗c6 h2 47.♖h1 ♖g1+ 48.♔b2 (or 48.♔a2 ♘d5/♘c2! 49.♖xh2 ♖xa7+ 50.♖xa7 ♘xb4+=) does not win after 48...f3! 49.♗xf3 ♖g3! 50.c6 ♖xf3 51.c7 ♘c4+ 52.♔b1 ♔d4= and perpetual check.

46...♖xa7 47.♖g8 ♗f6 48.d8♕ ♗xd8 49.♖xg4 ♗f6 50.♖g6 ♖b7 51.♗e2 ♖xb4+ 52.♔a2 ♘c2 53.♖c1 ♘d4 54.♗d3

4) The recommended 54.♗g4 (instead of 54.♗d3) does not win: 54...h2! 55.♖e1+ ♔d5 56.♖xf6 ♖a4+ 57.♔b2 ♖b4+ 58.♔c1 ♖c4+ 59.♔d1 ♖a4 60.♖h6 ♔c4 61.c6 (61.♗e2+ ♔c3 62.♖a6 ♘xe2 63.♖xa4 ♘g1=) 61...♔d3 62.♖h3+ f3 63.♗f5+ ♘xf5 64.♖xf3+ ♔c4 65.c7 ♘d6=.

54...♖a4+ 55.♔b1 ♘b3 56.♖e1+ ♔d5 57.♔c2 ♘d4+ 58.♔b1 ♘f3 59.♖d1

5) Instead of the final error 59.♖d1?, not only 59.♖xf6 but also 59.♖e2!? draws: 59...♖a1+ 60.♔c2 ♘d4+ 61.♔d2 ♘xe2 62.♗xe2 ♔e4 63.♖xf6 h2 64.♖e6+! ♔f5 65.♖h6 h1♕ 66.♖xh1 ♖xh1, with a tablebase draw: 67.c6 ♔e6 68.♗f3 ♖a1 69.♔d3=.

CC-GM Rolf Knobel
Rotkreuz, Switzerland

COLOPHON

PUBLISHER: Allard Hoogland
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF: Dirk Jan ten Geuzendam
HONORARY EDITOR: Jan Timman
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR: Anish Giri
EDITORS: Peter Boel, René Olthof
ART-DIRECTION: Jan Scholtus
PRODUCTION: Joop de Groot
TRANSLATORS: Ken Neat, Piet Verhagen
SALES AND ADVERTISING: Remmelt Otten

PHOTOS AND ILLUSTRATIONS IN THIS ISSUE: Maria Emelianova, Lars OA Hedlund, Eteri Kublashvili, Lennart Ootes, Eric van Reem, Georgios Souleidis, Berend Vonk

COVER PHOTO: Lennart Ootes

© No part of this magazine may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher.

NEW IN CHESS
P.O. BOX 1093
1810 KB ALKMAAR
THE NETHERLANDS

PHONE: 00-31-(0)72-51 27 137
SUBSCRIPTIONS: nic@newinchess.com
EDITORS: editors@newinchess.com
ADVERTISING: otten@newinchess.com

WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM

The United States Championship: A History

The United States Championship traces its roots back more than 170 years. During that time, the manner in which the title has been decided has changed multiple times and has included every imaginable format: matches, round-robins, knockouts and even large Swisses. The graphic on this page traces the history of the champions.

DYLAN LOEB McCLAIN

Charles Stanley 1845-57 — *Defeated Eugène Rousseau in a match*

Paul Morphy 1857-71 — *Won the 1st American Chess Congress*

George Henry Mackenzie 1871-91 — *Won the 2nd, 3rd and 5th American Chess Congresses*

Jackson Showalter 1891-92

Solomon Lipschutz 1892

Showalter 1893-94

Albert Hodges 1894

Showalter 1895-97

Harry Pillsbury 1898-1906

Frank Marshall 1909-36*

Samuel Reshevsky 1936

Reshevsky 1938

Reshevsky 1940

Reshevsky 1941 — *Match victory over I.A. Horowitz*

Reshevsky 1942 — *Reshevsky won a 14-game playoff with Isaac Kashdan*

Arnold Denker 1944

Reshevsky 1946

Herman Steiner 1948

Larry Evans 1951

Bobby Fischer 1957-58

Fischer 1958-59

Fischer 1959-60

Fischer 1960-61

Evans 1961-62

Fischer 1962-63

Fischer 1963-64

Fischer 1965

Fischer 1966

Evans 1968

Reshevsky 1969

Robert Byrne 1972

Lubomir Kavalek, John Grefe 1973

Walter Browne 1974

Browne 1975

Browne 1977

Kavalek 1978

Browne, Evans, Larry Christiansen 1980

Browne, Yasser Seirawan 1981

Browne, Christiansen, Roman Dzindzichashvili 1983

Lev Alburt 1984

Alburt 1985

Seirawan 1986

Joel Benjamin, Nick de Firmian 1987

Michael Wilder 1988

Dzindzichashvili, Seirawan, Stuart Rachels 1989

Alburt 1990

Gata Kamsky 1991

Patrick Wolff 1992

Alexander Shabalov, Alex Yermolinsky 1993

Boris Gulko 1994

Alexander Ivanov 1995

Yermolinsky 1996

Benjamin 1997

De Firmian 1998

Gulko 1999

Benjamin, Shabalov, Seirawan 2000

Christiansen 2002

Shabalov 2003

Hikaru Nakamura 2005

Alexander Onischuk 2006

Shabalov 2007

Yury Shulman 2008

Nakamura 2009

Kamsky 2010

Kamsky 2011

Nakamura 2012

Kamsky 2013

Kamsky 2014

Nakamura 2015

Fabiano Caruana 2015

Wesley So 2017

Samuel Shankland 2018

☐ Championships decided by matches.

*Before Marshall won the title by beating Showalter in a match, the title had effectively been vacant since the death of Pillsbury.

☐ Championships played at the Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis

The tournaments were large Swisses, each with more than 55 players.

The format was preliminaries and then finals.

The first knockout tournaments since the 1st Chess Congress of 1857.

Larry Evans

Boris Gulko, the only player to win the Soviet and the United States Championships.

Walter Browne

There was no playoff, so for the first time, there were co-champions.

Byrne won a playoff against Reshevsky and Lubomir Kavalek.

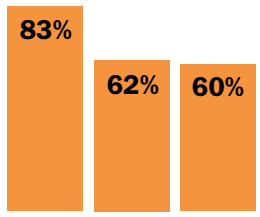
Most United States Championships

Including ties

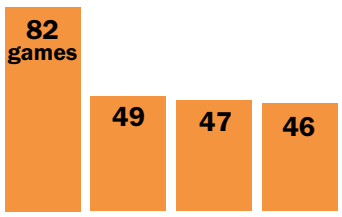
Bobby Fischer	8
Samuel Reshevsky	8
Walter Browne	6
Gata Kamsky	5
Larry Evans	5
Hikaru Nakamura	4
Alexander Shabalov	4
Yasser Seirawan	4
Lev Alburt	3
Larry Christiansen	3
Nick de Firmian	3
Joel Benjamin	3
Lubomir Kavalek	3

(lost playoff in 1972)

Highest winning percentages in U.S. Championship



Longest unbeaten streaks in U.S. Championships



Source: «The United States Championship, 1845-2011» by Andy Soltis, McFarland & Company

Fair & Square

Eric Holder: 'Jim (Comey) is a chess player... He's thinking, "What's the impact going to be one month, two months, six months from now?"'
(The former US attorney general, speaking in 2003, on the appointment of the now controversial former FBI director)

Dr. John Nunn: 'Chess, music and maths are self-contained systems that require no experience of life to master.'
(Said in 2015 on BBC Radio 4's More or Less feature on Maths and Chess)

Daniel Craig: 'Sexiness, particularly in the movies, is the chess game in *The Thomas Crown Affair*. It's, it's, I don't know, but Faye Dunaway comes up a lot in that thinking. It's the subtlety of sexiness. The moment you try to be sexy, then it's not.' *(The 007 actor on his tips for acting sexy in the movies, using the famous chess scene from the classic 1968 movie The Thomas Crown Affair)*

Emanuel Lasker: 'In mathematics, if I find a new approach to a problem, another mathematician might claim that he has a better, more elegant solution. In chess, if anybody claims he is better than I, I can checkmate him.'

Rafael Behr: '(Theresa) May is no grandmaster. The customs union trap was not hard to spot. To the EU she promised an invisible Irish border, and to Tory backbenchers she pledged freedom to diverge from European regulation. Those two things contradict one another.' *(The Guardian political columnist, on the UK Prime Minister's ongoing Brexit saga)*

Daniel Negreanu: 'Might be too late in life, and probably not advisable going into SHRB and WSOP next month, but somehow I've become addicted to Chess. I'm horrible at it, but I find it fun to really suck at something and get better.'
(Tweeted by the Canadian poker superstar in late April, ahead of competing in May's Super High Roller Bowl and the World Series of Poker)

Wesley So: 'The mind is a very fragile muscle – sometimes you can't control your mind. Ask anyone who plays chess!'
(The defending US Champion, commenting on the St. Louis live broadcast on Fabiano Caruana's shock loss to GM Zviad Izoria)

Yaroslav Zherebukh: 'It's an honour even to go to the same bathroom with these guys.' *(During the US Championship live broadcast, after drawing with Hikaru Nakamura, and asked by Maurice Ashley if he felt honoured to play alongside champions such as Fabiano Caruana, Wesley So and Nakamura)*

Rick Delmonico: 'The reason I believe that emotion is a higher state than intellect is that chess computers don't enjoy winning.'
(The American songwriter and poet)

Michael Klonovsky: 'Chess, considered as a test for the intellect, must be unimportant; or else surely there would have been more female grandmasters.'
(The German political journalist and commentator)

Roger Lowenstein: 'Being right on a stock had something of the purity of a perfect move in chess; it had an intellectual resonance.'
(The American writer in his authorized biography of billionaire stock-market guru Walter Buffett, Buffett: The Making of an American Capitalist)

Rafi Chowdhury: 'Even now, before starting my day, chess has to be my wake-up coffee. When I need focus, chess comes to my aid as a shield. This game is more like a therapy and strategy planner for me.' *(The Los Angeles-based entrepreneur, CEO and digital marketing consultant)*

Peter Leko: 'Chess is the toughest! The only problem is that people don't understand it. Those who are involved do, but the general public cannot understand how much effort is behind preparation and decision making.' *(During his live commentary of the Grenke Chess Classic)*

Magnus Carlsen:
'I like number one!'
(The quick-witted reply to Ljubomir Ljubojevic's question during the Gashimov Memorial live broadcast, on whether the World Champion has a favourite number)

LENNART OOTES

Self-confident and fully enjoying the moment, Sam Shankland awaits the start of the penultimate round. Fabiano Caruana is only half a point behind, but even two final wins will not suffice to catch up with Shankland.

The tallest King in St. Louis

Sam Shankland superb winner in US Championship

With all three top guns present, the new US Champion was going to be called Caruana, So or Nakamura. That's what everyone thought. But Sam Shankland begged to differ. In the most sensational championship in years, the California GM went on the rampage and saw a long-cherished dream come true, as he claimed the title, pocketed $50,000 and finally crossed the 2700 mark. Our reporter **ALEJANDRO RAMIREZ** explains why he sees Shankland as the epitome of the resurgence of American chess that Rex Sinquefield started in St. Louis a decade ago. The new champion annotates the two key games that brought him the title.

This year marked the 10th anniversary of the US Championship coming to St. Louis. The Chess Campus saw a revamp in the days prior to the championship, to celebrate the occasion. Some were simple and small details, like the change from the cumbersome name of Chess Club and Scholastic Center of Saint Louis to simply Saint Louis Chess Club, and the logo changes associated with this. Some were more difficult to miss: the gigantic chess piece in front of the World Chess Hall of Fame had lost its status as the tallest chess piece in the world to a small town in Belgium called Gitok. Never wanting to be second best, a new piece was created, considerably bigger than the last just in case someone attempts to steal the title away again.

Alongside the unveiling of the new piece, three new exhibits opened up at the WCHOF, one of which really caught my attention: The Sinquefield Effect: The Resurgence of American Chess.

It is perhaps easy to be near-sighted, and conveniently only recall how chess in America has changed since 2015, when the US Championship went from having Kamsky as the lone 2700 in 2014, to three near 2800s fighting for the first prize. That jump, however, definitely did not come from a vacuum.

Thanks to the efforts put forward by the STLCC, the overall culture, prestige and strength of chess in America has rapidly risen. Despite the attempts by previous organizers, the US Championship was simply not a good national championship. The best players would often skip the tournament, based on the simple mathematics that taking one of the top places was a net loss compared to giving lessons online that week and a half. The conditions ranged from acceptable to poor, and no one in the world really paid much attention to the event. That all changed in 2009.

As Alexander Onischuk remarked in his speech in last year's championship, in which he placed second after losing the tie-breaker to Wesley So, he was seriously considering quitting professional chess before the club came around. The club has created numerous opportunities for grandmasters to play, train, and make money. The championships are only one of the many events it now hosts: the rotating GM-in-residence program, the quarterly classic series aimed at the 2600+ American

players to practice and improve, the monthly Saturday Special tournament in which being a 2500 GM does not guarantee you being in the top-10 rated players for the night.

‘Sam Shankland has quit chess and come back more times than I can count, but his passion for the game has always remained.’

Interesting persona

Yes, there was a big jump in strength when Caruana and So joined the US Team, but this year there was a man that reminded us, strongly, that the home-grown crowd is in a different league now than it was 10 years ago.

Sam Shankland is an interesting persona. He has quit chess and come back more times than I can count, but his passion for the game has always remained, and he is about as addicted as any of the top players. His devotion and dedication to the study of the game shines through in his playing style and in his frustration throughout the years in which he failed to break into the 2700-club. He isn’t the most tactful person, always speaking exactly what is on his mind.

Before this tournament started, there was a question in the air of who would make it into the Olympiad team. Kamsky had declared that he would not form part of these events anymore, while Shankland, Robson, Onischuk, Xiong and Akobian seemed to have a decent chance at the two spots remaining after those reserved for the heavy-hitters. Shankland’s performance was so dominant it is almost funny to think about this question in retrospect.

Tipping the scales

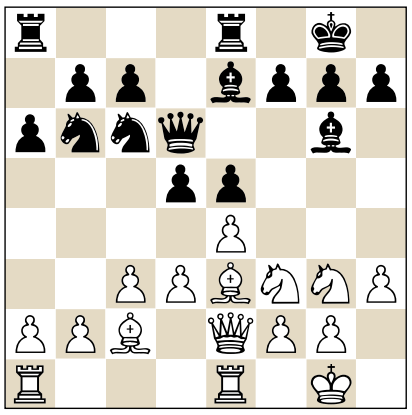
The opening ceremony was held at the beautiful Saint Louis University Art Museum. As usual, some people were inducted into the US Chess Hall of Fame (Onischuk, Goichberg) and into the World Chess Hall of Fame (Réti, Nimzowitsch, Zvorykina), and the drawing of lots was held. In addition, there were several reminders that one of the players had just done something amazing. A standing ovation was given to Caruana, and I suspect the reader very well knows why.

The cover of *Chess Life* had a scale in which the three top male players (Caruana, So, Nakamura) were joined by the top two women (Krush, Zatonskih), weighing them against all of the others, asking in which direction the balance would tilt. I thought it was silly for the women’s section to do this, but was pretty sure the winner of the championship section would be one of the top three. I could not have been more wrong.

Caissa’s plan

The tournament started more or less like one would have expected. Wesley So and Fabiano Caruana rocket launched with 2½/3 (as did Akobian), while Nakamura, a bit surprisingly, only scored 50% in the first few rounds. Everything seemed to be aligning to a normal Caissa plan. This is how So disposed of Onischuk:

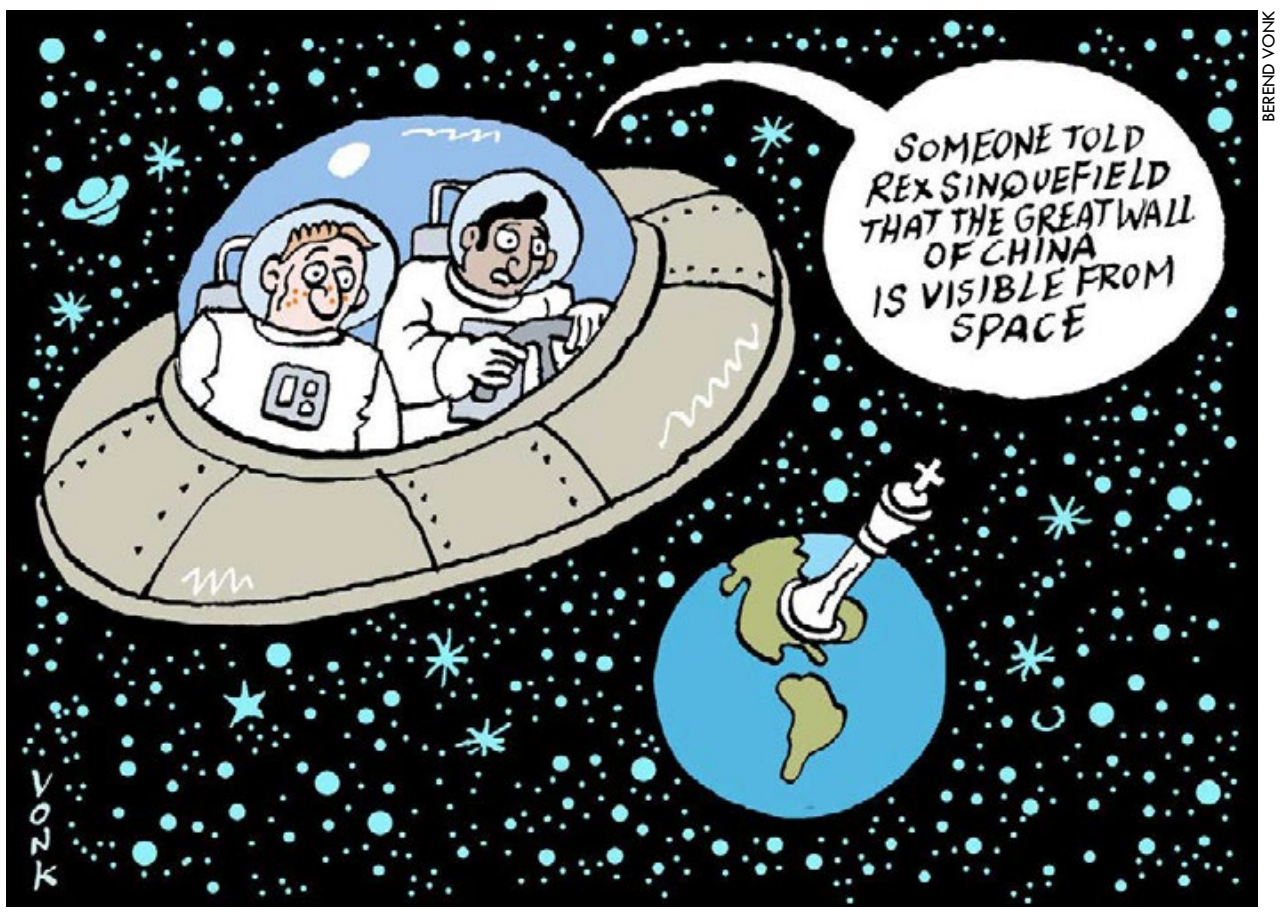
Wesley So
Alexander Onischuk
St. Louis 2018 (2)



position after 15...♕d6

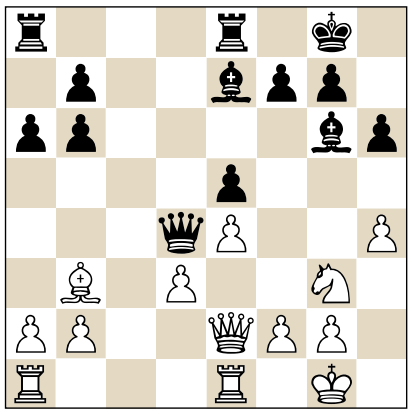
16.♗xb6! cxb6 17.h4 h6 18.♗b3!

After the exchange on b6, White’s light-square control is extremely dangerous. The bishop on b3 cannot be contested and the possibilities to jump to f5 are tough to deal with. Doing the commentary with WIM Ivette Garcia in the Spanish broadcast, we were always throwing in a quick h5 to push the bishop to h7 before embarking on an attack.

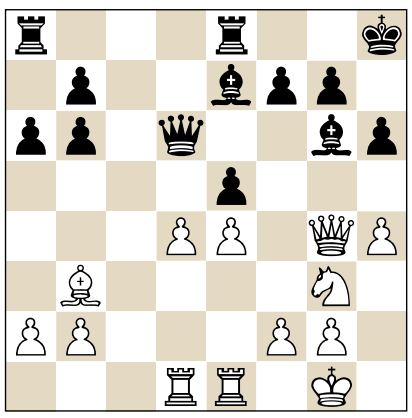


BERND VONK

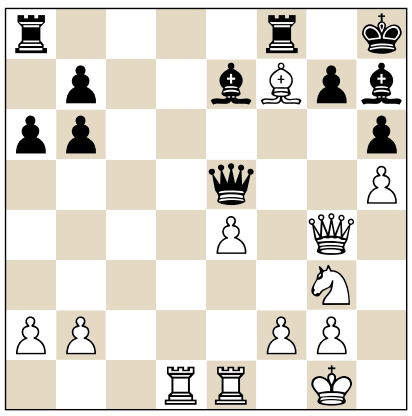
So is both more patient and more dangerous. **18...d4 19.cxd4 ♘xd4 20.♘xd4 ♕xd4**



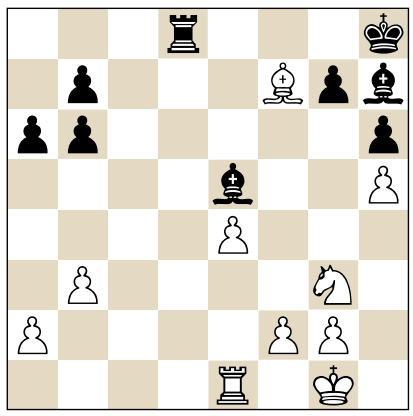
21.♕g4! An important difference. The bishop is actually vulnerable on g6 and White gains a nice tempo against it.
21...♕d6 21...♗h7 22.♘h5 g6 23.♘g3 is no fun at all.
22.d4! ♔h8 23.♖ad1



White is just crashing through and Black has to walk a tightrope.
23...♕f6 23...exd4 24.h5 ♗h7 25.e5 ♕c5 26.♗xf7 ♖f8 27.♗g6 ♗xg6 28.hxg6 ♖ad8 29.♘f5! is also miserable.
24.h5 ♗h7 25.dxe5 ♕xe5 26.♗xf7 ♖f8



27.♕e6!
27.♗g6 ♗g8 leaves the queens on the board, making the conversion task much harder.
27...♗f6 28.♕xe5 ♗xe5 29.♖d7 ♖ad8 30.♖xd8 ♖xd8 31.b3



Black faces the incredibly unpleasant task of defending this endgame. His pair of bishops is strong, but so is the bishop coming to d5, and White has two extra pawns on the kingside. In a normal tournament, Onischuk would have put up much stiffer resistance, but this was not Onischuk's best event.
31...♖d7 32.♗e6 ♖e7 33.♗d5 ♗xg3 34.fxg3 ♗g8 35.♔f2 ♗e6 36.♗xe6 ♖xe6 37.♔e3 ♔g8 38.♖f1 g6 39.hxg6 ♖xg6 40.♖f3 ♔g7 41.e5 ♖g4 42.♔d3 b5 43.e6 ♖g6 44.e7 ♖d6+ 45.♔e2
Black resigned.

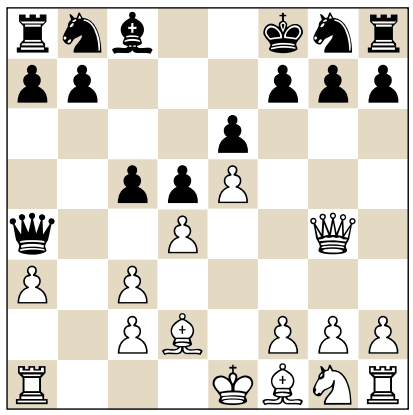
LENNART OOTES

Wesley So had an excellent start with two wins, but drawing his remaining games last year's champion had to settle for third place.

Against Lenderman, Caruana showed that keeping up with chess literature can have benefits. After the game Lenderman indicated that stopping his NIC Yearbook subscription might not have been a good plan, citing the Russian saying, cheap is doubly expensive.

Fabiano Caruana
Aleksandr Lenderman
St Louis 2018 (2)
French Defence, Winawer Variation

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e5 c5 5.a3 ♗xc3+ 6.bxc3 ♕a5 7.♗d2 ♕a4 8.♕g4 ♔f8

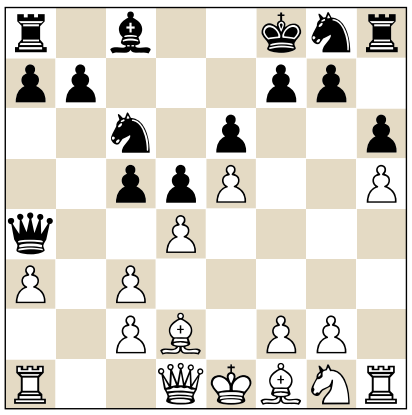


A sharp line of the French which has a questionable reputation, even without the next move.

9.h4!? Caruana mentioned that he had seen this idea as he was leafing through New In Chess Yearbook 126 the night before the game. The move looks logical enough. If you can get away without defending the c2-pawn, then why defend it?

9...♘c6 9...♕xc2 10.♖h3!? gives White compensation, or an unclear endgame after 10...♕e4+.

10.h5 h6 11.♕d1 Relative to the early ♕d1 lines, the White pawn has advanced to h5 here, and Black hasn't had time to play ...b6 ...♗a6 yet.

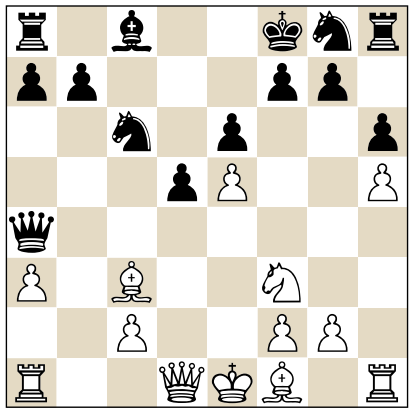


11...cxd4?

The start of a long series of moves in this game by Lenderman that can be best described as 'suicidal'.

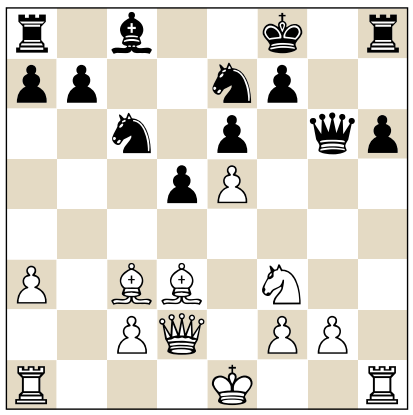
11...b6 12.♘f3 ♗a6 leads to playable positions for both sides, though I find it hard to dislike White.

12.♘f3 dxc3 13.♗xc3



13...g5 This looks ugly, but ♖h4 was a huge threat (trapping the queen) and grabbing the knight on c6 to withdraw it to d8 is almost physically painful to do.

14.hxg6 ♕e4+ 15.♗e2 ♕xg6 16.♕d2 ♘ge7 17.♗d3



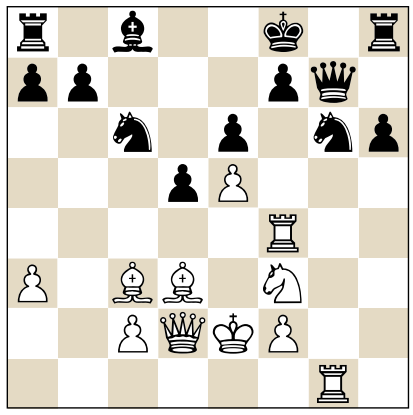
17...♕xg2?

17...♕g7 offered some chances, though after any move Caruana would hold a very strong initiative.

18.♔e2

Obvious and winning. The queen is trapped and the king is mated. Not to mention Black's development.

18...♕g4 19.♖h4 ♕g7 20.♖g1 ♘g6 21.♖f4!



Fancy and precise.

21...♘ce7 21...♘xf4+ runs into 22.♕xf4.

An amateur friend of mine who follows chess, but not too closely, asked me how the Caruana-Lenderman game went. 'Lenderman's queen got trapped on g7 in a French' summed it up.

22.♗b4 a5 23.♖xg6

Black resigned.

Round 4 saw a big upset and reminded us of something that, for some reason, chess players always seem to forget: Caissa is an unforgiving goddess, and none of her plans are straightforward.

Play with the world's best correspondence chess players on one of the most advanced chess servers in the world.

Register at: **www.iccf-webchess.com**

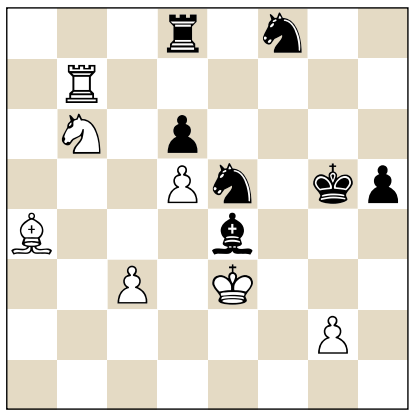
Join a team of thousands playing great chess at ICCF.

ICCF also offers World Championships, Olympiads, and many other Team and Individual Tournaments where you can participate from any place around the globe.

View live games of the world's best players – also free games downloads.

Contact us at: **www.iccf.com**

Fabiano Caruana
Zviad Izoria
St. Louis 2018 (4)



position after 61...♗xe4

Before the start of the game, Izoria was certainly a total underdog. Out-rated by more than 200 points, playing as Black, and not having played true professional chess in a long, long time. His start of ½-2½ was riddled with blunders and time-pressure problems. He even started with a strong disadvantage from the opening in this game, but he managed to outplay Caruana, and eventually reach this position.

62.♔xe4 ♘fg6

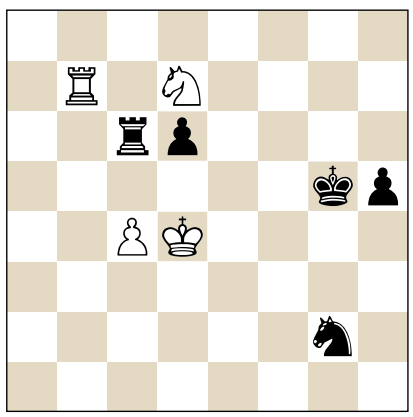
White is up a pawn, but Black's knights are strong and it's extremely hard to convert this endgame.

63.♘d7 ♖c8 64.♗c6

Played with little time on the clock. Allowing ...♖c4+ seemed dangerous, but this gives back the pawn.

64...♘xc6 65.dxc6 ♖xc6 66.♔d4 ♘f4 Black wins a pawn, but again this should end in a draw.

67.c4 ♘xg2



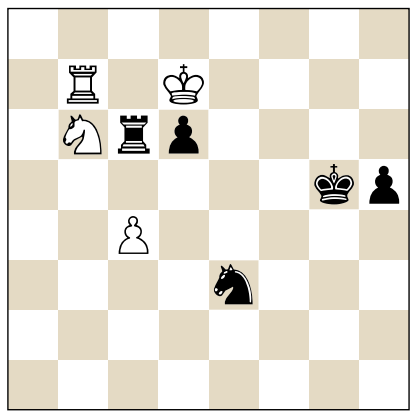
68.♔d5?! 68.♖b5+ forces the king back so as to prevent ♘f6, after which the draw should be obvious: 68...♔g6 69.♘f8+ ♔h6 70.♘e6, and Black can't push his h-pawn, save his knight, reactivate his rook and keep the d-pawn protected all at the same time.

68...♖c8 69.♘b6?

69.♔xd6 ♖xc4 70.♖b5+ ♔h6 71.♘f6 is not that unpleasant: 71...h4 72.♘g8+ ♔h7 73.♖g5 and it will be a draw.

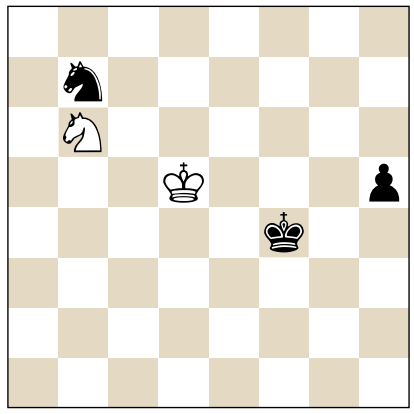
69...♘e3+ 70.♔e6 ♖c6 71.♔d7

71.♖g7+ ♔h4 72.♖b7 is still a kind of study-like draw.



71...♘xc4! An easy move to miss in time-trouble. Caruana kept blitzing, but things were suddenly very, very wrong for him.

72.♔xc6 ♘a5+ 73.♔xd6 ♘xb7+ 74.♔d5 ♔f4



Oops, neither the king nor the knight can reach the h-pawn. The players were blitzing so quickly it took a second for the improbable to dawn on the spectators as reality: Caruana was going down.

75.♘c4 h4 76.♘d2 h3 77.♘f1 ♘d8 78.♔d4 ♘f7 79.♔d5 ♘e5 80.♔d4 ♘g4 81.♔d3 ♔f3

White resigned.

Celeb 64

John Henderson

Arnold Schwarzenegger

The former Governor of California and star of – well, you know all his films – has long been a big chess fan. He not only plays the game, he's actively encouraged kids to be taught how to play chess at school, and he can even count on his good friendship with a certain Garry Kasparov.

'Arnie' first got the chess bug when he was a competitive bodybuilder, using the game as a way to relax in between his strenuous daily workouts at the gym. And when he did become a big Hollywood action hero star, you could always be sure to find his favourite chessboard prominently placed in his trailer.

He taught his four kids – Katherine, Christina, Patrick and Christopher – to play, even hiring a chess coach for them to improve. He also became deeply involved in the After-School All-Stars movement, which includes year-round Summer and after-school programs in sports, computer technology, fine arts, education – and chess.

Recently, the Terminator star (70) had to undergo unexpected major heart surgery. But he's in good spirits, and posted a video of his convalescence across his social media accounts, that was recorded while he sat at home in front of his chessboard, with his message: 'I'm here at a chessboard, playing a little bit of chess, to freshen my mind and my memory a little bit and we move forward.' ■

Meanwhile, Akobian drew his game and shared the lead with 3.0/4 with Shankland and So, while Nakamura still hadn't scored a full point.

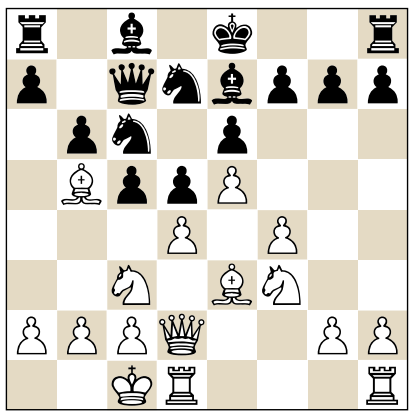
The next day showed that Caruana may be a super-grandmaster, and the next contender for the World Championship, but that he is not immune to psychological pressure. After his loss against Izoria he played a poor opening idea against Shankland and had to work hard to save the draw. As all games were drawn, things at the top did not change. Round 6, however, proved crucial for the race. Caruana defeated Robson after sacrificing (this time properly) a pawn in the Petroff, while Shankland took advantage of a small gift from Akobian, who misplayed a slightly better position and even went on to lose.

The next day was a rest day, which in St. Louis usually means some activity or other for the players. More of a community service day, in which players travel to one of the many schools in which the chess club has a program, encouraging youngsters to keep practicing the game, make good life choices and stay in school. These outings have proven to be very successful in many at-risk schools, with overwhelmingly positive feedback. For the players, of course, taking a break from playing is always a dangerous thing. Some get inspired by the break, and start playing even better chess, while for others the break from the routine is a dangerous potential pitfall, as they find it hard to regain the concentration exhibited in the first half.

These polar opposites were most clearly exemplified by Shankland and Akobian. Caruana took advantage of Akobian's form immediately and crushed him mercilessly in a demolition of the French.

Fabiano Caruana
Varuzhan Akobian
St. Louis 2018 (7)
French Defence, Steinitz Variation

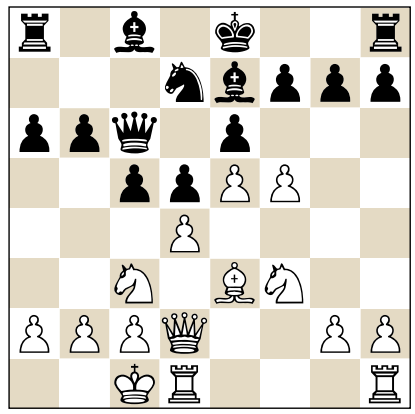
1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e5 ♘fd7 5.f4 c5 6.♘f3 ♗e7 7.♗e3 ♘c6 8.♕d2 b6 9.♗b5 ♕c7 10.0-0-0



A novelty in a rare line.

10...a6 11.♗xc6 ♕xc6 12.f5

White is logically trying to pry open the kingside. Computers, at least my poor obsolete 16-core engine, think that the move played in the game and 12...0-0 are the best moves. Both look equally suicidal to me; maybe the position is just awful for Black already.



12...c4

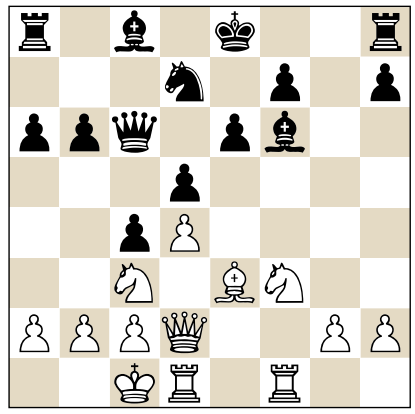
Black closes the queenside to quickly expand on it. I thought that Akobian's plan might be to castle queenside at some point.

After 12...0-0 13.f6 gxf6 14.♗h6 it's possible that this can be analysed to forced mate.

After 12...♗b7, 13.♗g5! is a huge problem, as the king is not allowed to evacuate the centre.

13.f6 gxf6 14.exf6 ♗xf6 15.♖hf1

White's compensation is obvious: with an open f-file and a huge lead in development for White, Black's king is feeling the heat.



15...b5? This, in my view, precipitated Black's defeat. 15...♗e7 is a

ACO
Amateur Chess Organization

World Senior Chess Championship 2018

15th - 24th October 2018 Crete (Greece)

Open to all players with a minimum age of 50 years
5-star All-Inclusive Fodele Beach Resort / 9 nights from 699 € p.p.
5.000 € prize fund / 7 separated rating groups

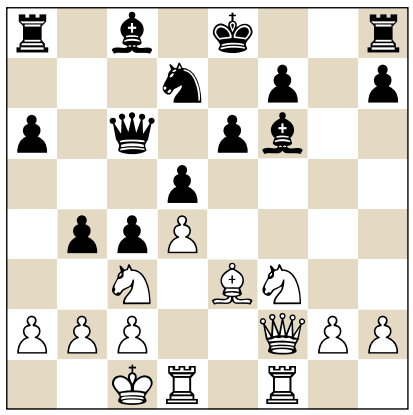
www.amateurchess.com/senior

LENNART OOTES

Fabiano Caruana mercilessly crushed Varuzhan Akobian in a demolition of the French. Initially among the leaders, Akobian collapsed completely in the second half.

useful defensive move, as ♘e5 blows lose a bit of their power. However, after 16.♗g5 f6 17.♗h4 ♗b7 18.♖de1 this will be an awful endgame at best once White recaptures his pawn by ganging up on the weakling on e6.

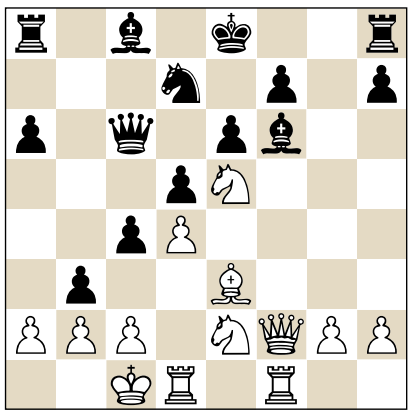
16.♕f2! b4



17.♘e2

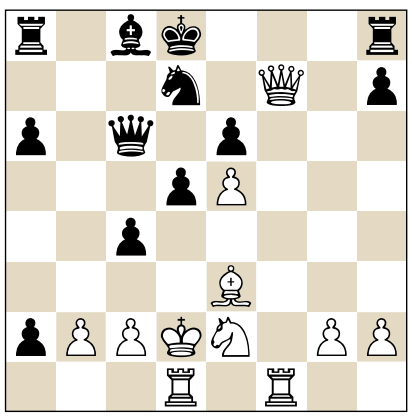
17.♘e4! dxe4 18.♘e5 was a beautiful combination: 18...♕d5 19.♘xd7 ♔xd7 20.♕xf6, winning. Or 18...♗xe5 19.♕xf7+ ♔d8 20.dxe5 ♔c7 21.♖d6 ♕b5, and now both 22.♕e7 and 22.♕xe6 are totally winning. But the move in the game is also very strong. Black's king just can't survive.

17...b3 18.♘e5!



18...♗xe5 18...bxa2 19.♘xc6 a1♕+ 20.♔d2 is just losing once the knight returns to e5.

19.♕xf7+ ♔d8 20.dxe5 bxa2 21.♔d2



The passed pawn on a2 is annoying, but will never be more than that. Meanwhile, ♘d4 is a game-winning threat.

21...♖f8 22.♕xh7 ♖xf1 23.♖xf1 d4 24.♕g8+ ♔c7 25.♘xd4 ♕d5 26.♕xe6 ♕a5+ 26...♗b7 27.♕xd5 ♗xd5 28.♖a1 is lost, but offers more hope than the game.

27.c3 ♘xe5 28.♖f7+! A simple, but nice finishing touch. **28...♘xf7 29.♗f4+ ♔b7 30.♕xf7+** 1-0.

Simply unrecognizable

It was a tough day for Nakamura fans, as he lost to Izoria. A player who was expected to be fighting for the top spots was suddenly on -1. Nakamura is not known for having exceedingly bad tournaments, but he was simply unrecognizable. After seven rounds it was clear that his goal was not to fight for first place, but to somehow minimize his losses and stay inside the world top-10.

The program for Round 8 was as juicy as it gets: So with White against Caruana, trailing him and Shankland by half a point. And Shankland with the black pieces against a hungry Nakamura. One half of the promise was certainly fulfilled: Nakamura went for a win with 1.b3. What he did not expect, however, was that Shankland was fully prepared. The near-2800 player was under severe pressure from the get-go, and it was only through a couple of missteps by Shankland that Black did not take the victory.

The other game that everyone was looking forward to was probably the most disappointing game of the event. With a win, So would overtake Caruana, with only three more games left, and two of those being with the black pieces for So, it seemed natural to go for the jugular. Instead, So played an insipid line against the Petroff, and the direction of the game towards a draw was obvious in the first 15 minutes of play, despite the game lasting 45 moves. Everyone has different approaches to tournaments, but it was difficult to believe that with this fighting spirit, So would have a chance at winning the tournament with three rounds to go.

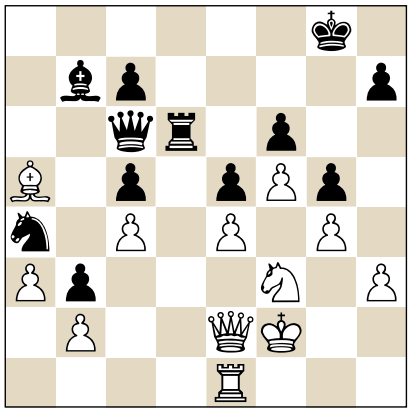
‘It was easy to predict that Shankland and Caruana would fight tooth and nail every game for every full point, but the outcome of the last rounds was amazing.’

The final sprint

The three last rounds were focused on only three people. Caruana, Shankland, and So as the outsider looking in. It was easy to predict that Shankland and Caruana would fight tooth and nail for every full point every game, but the outcome of the last rounds was amazing. ‘I’ve never been tied for the lead with three rounds to go, scored 2½/3 and not even shared first’, said an incredulous Caruana.

Things started off in a strange game between Shankland and St. Louis University’s Yaroslav Zherebukh. After winning a piece due to a mistake by his opponent, Shankland contained the counterplay and obtained a decisive advantage, which he let slip little by little until Zherebukh had a certain draw. Not finding it, he kept misplaying the endgame, and eventually lost it. Caruana was unable to break through Nakamura’s defences, and was lucky that Nakamura rejected the following combination:

Fabiano Caruana
Hikaru Nakamura
St. Louis 2018 (9)



position after 46.♖e1

After suffering for a while, Caruana mis-stepped and was forced into this position. Here Nakamura played **46...♖d8** and the game ended in a draw after 53 moves.

In a bullet game Nakamura finds 46...♕xe4, plays it and collects the full point. Nakamura finds the move and for some odd reason does not play it.

After 46...♕xe4 47.♕xe4 ♗xe4 48.♖xe4 ♘xb2 the passed pawn is impossible to stop. There are too many checks with the knight and White’s pieces are constantly getting forked. The only try is: 49.♔e2 ♘xc4! 50.♗c3 b2 51.♗xb2 ♘xb2. We reach this position basically by force. Caruana asked Nakamura after the game if he had not seen 46...♕xe4, to which he replied that he had, but that he thought that this endgame was unclear. That is baffling.

With two rounds to go, Shankland had established a half-point lead, but he had to face Onischuk with Black in the penultimate round. Besides Nakamura, Onischuk was certainly the most negative surprise of the event. Going from second place last year to a dismal 3/11 is hard to explain. Probably the truth is that everyone, even someone as strong and consistent as Onischuk, can have a bad tournament once in a while. Shankland was on fire, and despite missing a simple win in the middle of the game, he convincingly outplayed his opponent with no chances at all.

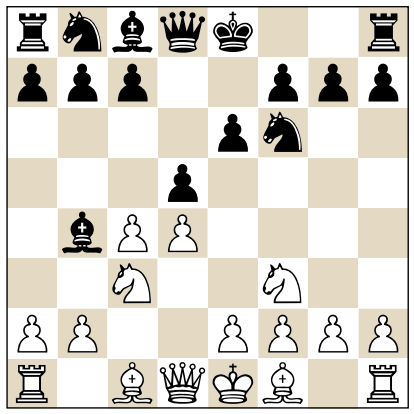
Well, why am I telling you anything, here are the annotations by the winner!

NOTES BY
Sam Shankland

Alexander Onischuk
Sam Shankland
St. Louis 2018 (10)
Queen’s Gambit Declined, Ragozin Variation

Going into the penultimate round, I knew I had a tough task ahead of me. Alex Onischuk was having the worst tournament I can ever remember seeing him play, but that did not change that he is a very high-class player. I had a feeling I might really need a win with Black, so I chose a line that I thought gave me certain positional long-term trumps.

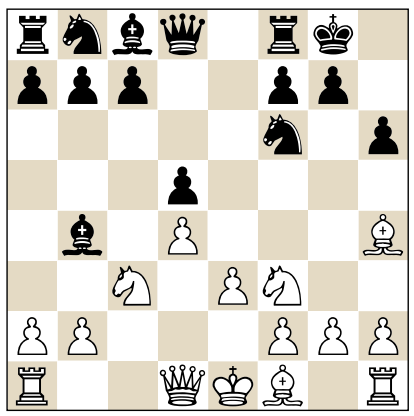
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 ♗b4



I am not much of a Ragozin player, but I prepared it for the US Championship and reviewed it for three different games before this one, despite not actually getting a chance to play it. So the analysis was fresh in my head.

5.cxd5 exd5 6.♗g5 h6 7.♗h4 0-0!? An interesting new trend. 7...c5 is the main move, leading to a totally different position.

8.e3



8...♗f5! Black reaches a standard Carlsbad structure in which he has

already assumed control of the all-important b1-h7 diagonal. If White does not do something very direct, Black will have a very comfortable game in just a couple of moves.

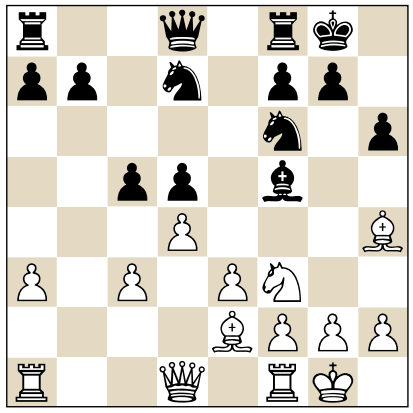
9.a3 White forces the win of the bishop pair, but he had a more effective way to do so.

I believe 9.♕b3 is White's most critical try, as has been tested recently in the games Le Quang-Vidit and Aronian-Wojtaszek. White snags the bishop pair while still developing the queen: 9...♗xc3+ 10.bxc3! (10.♕xc3 ♘bd7 is equal) 10...♘bd7 11.♗e2 c5 12.dxc5. White might have some edge, but it is nothing too serious. Black held easily in the afore-mentioned Aronian-Wojtaszek encounter.

9...♗xc3+

Bad is 9...♗e7?, as after 10.♗xf6 ♗xf6 11.♕b3 Black loses material.

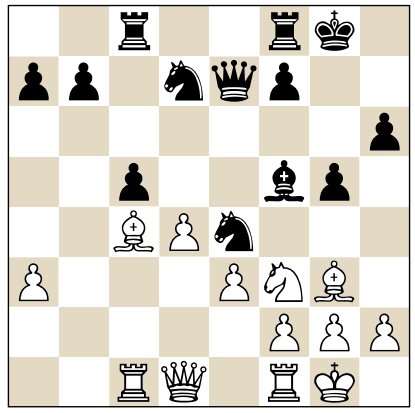
10.bxc3 ♘bd7 11.♗e2 c5 12.0-0



12...g5 Perhaps it was more in the spirit of the Ragozin to lock the queenside with 12...c4!?, when Black can hope his pawn majority will be more effective than White's, since the e3-e4 advance will be very hard to carry out. For some reason I was hesitant to do so, though it would have been an opportunity for me to put a more imbalanced position on the board: 13.♘d2 ♕a5 14.♕c1 ♖fe8. I was not sure about a position like this one, though the computer thinks Black is fine.

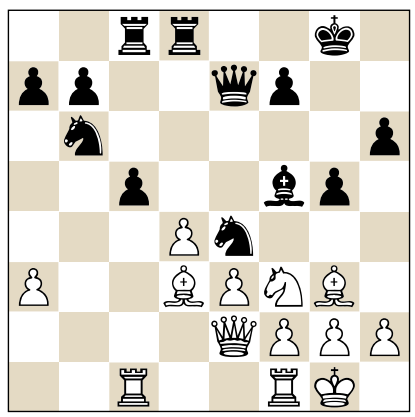
13.♗g3 ♘e4 Black's play is very natural. **14.c4** If 14.♖c1 then 14...c4. I would not have had to be asked twice about this one.

14...dxc4 15.♗xc4 ♖c8 16.♖c1 ♕e7



The position seems very balanced, but I actually think Black is under a little pressure. His compromised kingside may not seem like much of an issue, but it can become one faster than I might appreciate.

17.♗d3 ♖fd8 18.♕e2 ♘b6



LENNART OOTES

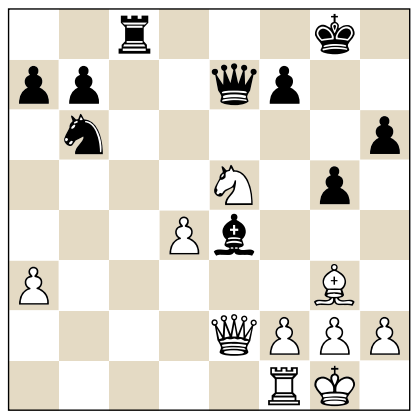
Sam Shankland briefly glances at the game Robson-So, as he paces the playing room in full concentration during his game against Onischuk.

19.♗xe4 This move surprised me, but it is not without merit.

I had expected White to complete his development with 19.♖fd1. After 19...cxd4 20.♖xc8 ♖xc8 21.♗xe4 ♗xe4 22.♘xd4 ♕xa3 23.h4 the machine reads equal, but it looked very scary to me during the game. White has serious attacking chances.

19...♗xe4 20.♘e5 cxd4 21.♖xc8 ♖xc8 22.exd4

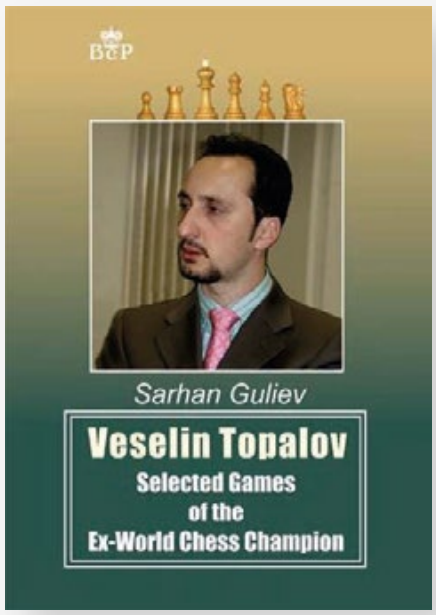
Black's king's cover is a little loose, and the opposite-coloured bishops do not help. But with accurate play, he should be fine.



22...♗f5!

The right square. White's knight mustn't be allowed to come to g4, and the f2-f4 thrust can now be comfort-

Don't judge this book by its cover!



It may look like the publication of a politburo subcommittee, but this book is actually extremely good:

- a wonderful selection of 90 games
- of one of the most dynamic chess players
- analysed by well-known chess author GM Sarhan Guliev
- with an opening essay on Topalov's career by GM Sergey Klimov
- with a foreword by Veselin Topalov himself
- in a first-class English translation
- in a 460 page deluxe hardcover edition.

"I hope that readers will enjoy this book. It only remains for me to say a huge 'thank you' to Grandmaster Guliev for his captivating analysis."

Veselin Topalov

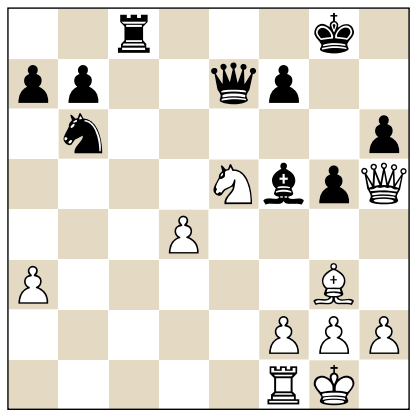
467 pages | €29.95

available at your local (chess)bookseller or at www.newinchess.com

ably met by ...g5-g4, keeping the position closed.
After 22...♗d5? 23.♕h5 ♔h7 24.h4 White's initiative is growing rapidly.
And 22...♗h7? loses to 23.♕h5 ♔g7 24.♘g4.

23.♕h5

I was expecting White to provoke the bishop to e6 first with 23.♕f3, before going to h5, but after 23...♕e6! 24.♕xb7 f6 25.♘f3 ♕d7, despite the pawn deficit, Black looks fine. His pieces are much better than their white counterparts and the d-pawn is firmly under control.



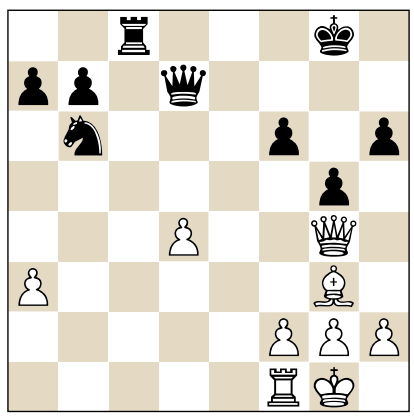
23...f6!

Around here I was starting to get optimistic. The good knight vs bad bishop could get pretty bad for White.

24.♘g4

After 24.♕xh6 Black goes 24...♕g7! (24...fxe5?! 25.♗xe5 looks much less clear to me). There is no need to let White get attacking chances. 25.♕xg7+ (after 25.♕h5 fxe5 26.♗xe5 ♕g6! the g5-pawn lives and Black is safe enough, he should just be winning) 25...♔xg7 26.♘f3 ♖c3. Black's activity is very impressive.

24...♗xg4 25.♕xg4 ♕d7

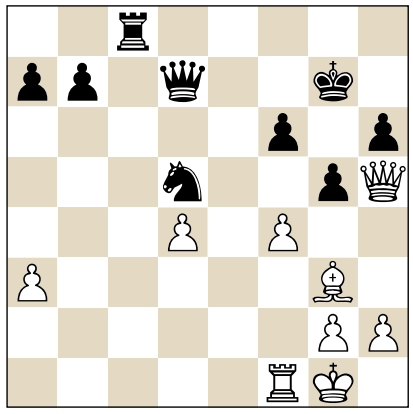


26.♕f3?!

Around here, White started to drift. I would have gone with the most direct move, 26.♕h5, when there are still attacking chances: 26...♔g7 27.f4 and both sides have their chances.

26...♘d5 27.♕h5 ♔g7 28.f4?

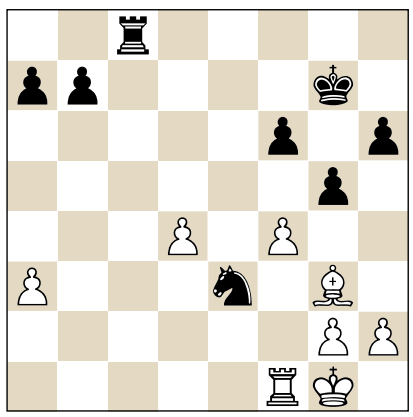
A bad move in a bad position.



28...♕e8?

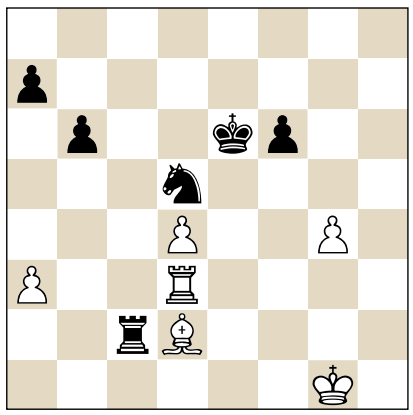
A clear case of 'if you see a good move, look for a better one!' I noticed that White was now forced to swap queens and go into a miserable endgame, but I had a better option.
28...♘xf4!, trading the knight for White's bishop is a very difficult candidate move to spot because it looks so silly, but it simply wins the game on the spot! There is even hardly any calculation to be done: 29.♗xf4 ♕xd4+ 30.♔h1 ♕xf4, and wins.

29.♕f3 ♕e3+ 30.♕xe3 ♘xe3

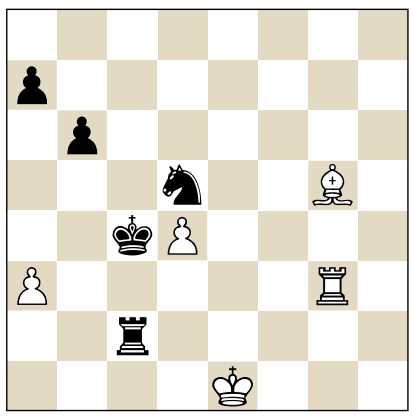


White now has a very unenviable task ahead of him.

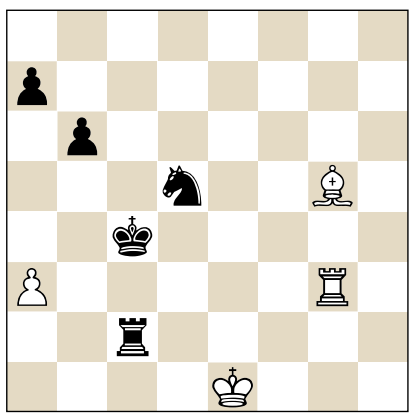
31.♖f3 ♘d5 32.fxg5 hxg5 33.h4 gxh4 34.♗xh4 ♔f7 35.♗e1 b6 36.♗d2 ♖c2 37.♖d3 ♔e6 38.g4



38...♔d6?
I was hoping to keep the pawns on the board, but ultimately White was able to get them off anyway. I could have got to the centre much faster by forcing through with ...f5 directly: 38...f5! 39.gxf5+ ♔xf5 40.♗h6 ♔e4 41.♖g3 ♔xd4. White's king is much farther away from the action than it was in the game. Black should win.
39.♔f1 ♔c6 40.♔e1 ♔b5 41.g5!
Around here, I felt it had been a bad idea to not play ...f5, since the pawns will trade anyway and I lost some time with my king.
41...fxg5 42.♗xg5 ♔c4 43.♖g3



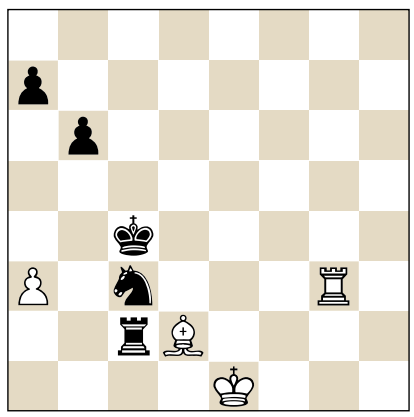
43...♘c3! I like this move a lot. White should not be allowed to play ♗d2 or ♔d1.
44.d5! ♘xd5



LENNART OOTES

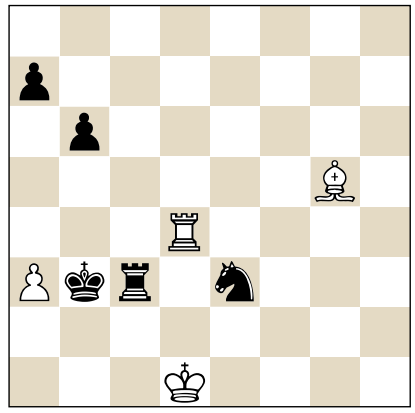
And if you are curious to see what the tallest chess piece in the world (over six metres) really looks like these days…

Around here, I thought I should be winning, but it's not nearly as clear as I expected it to be during the game.
45.♔d1? Losing on the spot. The alternative did not necessarily guarantee a draw, but it would have offered a lot more resistance. I am still unsure of the objective evaluation.
After 45.♗d2, 45...♔b5!, the computer's move, is best, and Black retains good winning chances. 45...♘c3? was my plan during the game, but it had a large flaw.



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

After 46.♖g7 ♘b5, I thought White is just losing on the spot, but I had missed that after 47.♖g4+! my king cannot go to b3! Now it should be a draw.
45...♖c3! Now the a3-pawn falls.
46.♖g4+ Or 46.♖xc3+ ♔xc3 47.♗h6 ♔b3 48.♗f8 ♘c3+ 49.♔c1 ♘b5, winning.
46...♔b3 47.♖d4 ♘e3+



48.♗xe3 48.♔e2 ♘c4 does not help matters. **48...♖xe3 49.♔d2 ♖h3** With the a-pawn about to fall, Alex called it a day.

■ ■ ■

Meanwhile, also with black, Caruana evaporated Zherebukh, keeping the tension alive. Round 10 had a very curious statistic. Three players scored their only full point of the tournament: Xiong (over Lenderman), Liang (over Izoria) and Nakamura (over Akobian). If someone had predicted this before the event, with Nakamura being one of the players and Xiong coming from a 2800+ performance in his previous tournament, I would have been incredulous.

The last round was set, one more hurdle for Shankland: boy-wonder Awonder Liang, with White. As it was not unreasonable to expect that Caruana, also with White, would outplay Onischuk and take the full point (as indeed happened), Shankland needed a win.

Here's his game against Liang in Sam's own words.

'I was hoping to outplay my younger opponent in a long game. Soon enough, though, he managed to complicate things!'

NOTES BY
Sam Shankland

Sam Shankland
Awonder Liang
St. Louis 2018 (11)
Caro-Kann Advance, Exchange Variation

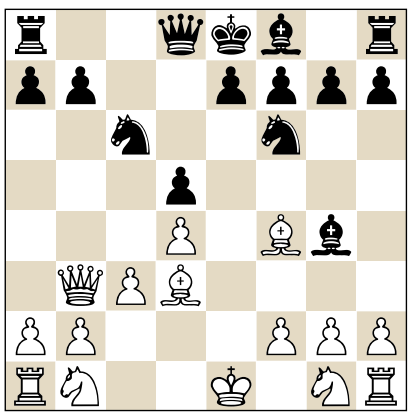
Going into the final round, I was hoping to get a reasonably quiet position in which I could hope to outplay my younger opponent in a long game. Soon enough, though, he managed to complicate things!

1.e4 c6

The first surprise. I was expecting to get a Spanish or a Sicilian.

2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.♗d3 ♘c6 5.c3 ♘f6 6.♗f4 ♗g4 7.♕b3

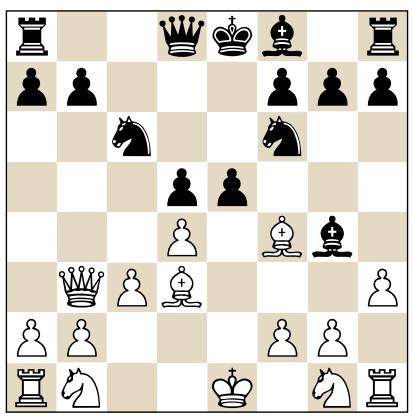
At this point, Black has almost always chosen between 7...♕c8 and 7...♕d7. Luckily, I had checked the sharp move he chose instead on the morning of the game.



7...e5!? 8.h3!

White ignores the threat to his bishop and threatens the other one! Black's position is already very dangerous, since he must acquiesce to the bishop trade, compromising his structure and opening the h-file.

Taking the pawn, 8.dxe5, does not offer White much of anything: 8...♘h5! 9.♗e3 (9.♕xb7? ♘xf4 10.♕xc6+ ♗d7 11.♕a6 ♖b8, and White can resign. Not a good way to lose the US Championship!) 9...♘xe5 10.♗b5+ ♘c6, and Black has a pretty reasonably French Tarrasch. He looks happy enough to me.



8...exf4?!

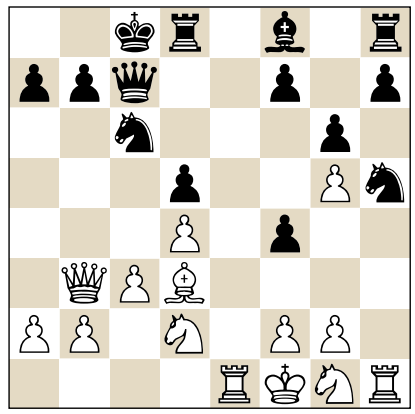
After 8...♗e6? 9.♗xe5, Black no longer has ...♕e7 at his disposal and is basically a pawn down.

Black was right that he needed to take on f4, but he could have done himself a favour by including 8...♘a5! first: 9.♕c2 exf4 (9...♗d1!? is some computer nonsense. White looks better after 10.♕xd1 exf4 11.♘f3) 10.hxg4 ♘xg4!, and at least Black gets a pawn for his suffering. Still, I think White has a very dangerous initiative after 11.♔f1.

9.hxg4 ♕e7+ 10.♔f1 0-0-0 11.♘d2

White is a bit better, and his position is very easy to play.

11...g6 12.♖e1 ♕c7 13.g5 ♘h5



14.♗e2!

I think it's quite important to push the knight off of h5, so that Black cannot get ...h7-h6 in.

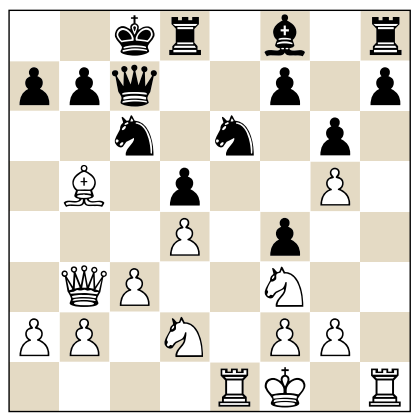
Instead, 14.♘gf3 h6 looked much less convincing to me.

14...♘g7 15.♘gf3 ♘e6

Black has chances to attack the g5-pawn, but White's play is too fast.

16.♗b5!

Fighting for control of the e5-square.



16...♗g7?!

There wasn't anything great, but I really dislike putting the bishop on such a passive square that is so easily blocked by White's dark-square pawn chain.

16...♗e7, going after the g5-pawn, will not solve Black's problems. After 17.♕a4! ♘xg5 18.♗xc6 bxc6 19.♘e5! Black will lose the c6-pawn, and he is clearly worse: 19...♖d6 20.♘xc6 (20.c4!?) 20...♕xc6 21.♕xc6+ ♖xc6 22.♖xe7. This looks really unpleasant.

17.♕a4!

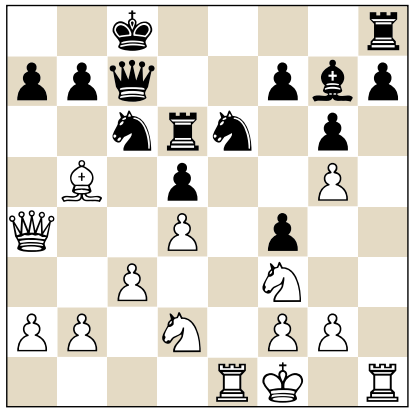
White's position is almost picture perfect, but he has one bad piece: the knight on d2. I played 17.♕a4, both to threaten ♗xc6, when Black would be forced to worsen his structure with ...b7xc6, and to clear the b3-square

for the knight to use to jump to c5 or reroute to d3 via c1.

17...♖d6

Black prevents me from dragging the b-pawn to c6.

The machine's recommendation 17...a6? is beyond depressing: 18.♗xc6 ♕xc6 19.♕xc6+ bxc6 20.b4. This looks absolutely awful for Black.



18.♘b3! Simple and strong. White improves his pieces.

18.♗xc6? ♖xc6! 19.♕xa7?? ♖a6 is the tactical point behind 17...♖d6.

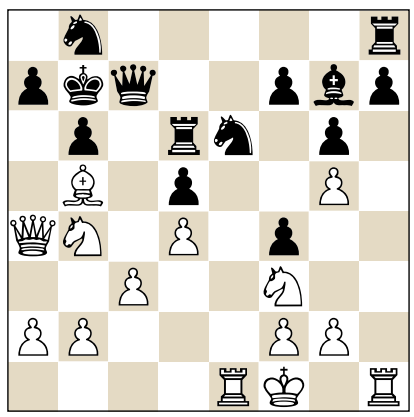
The machine prefers the direct attack with 18.b4?, but I prefer my move. There is no need to leave a weakness on c3 when a simple move provides a very pleasant advantage.

18...b6? A poor strategic decision. Black's queenside light squares will now be chronically weak, and the b3-knight still has a clear route back into the game.

19.♘c1 ♘b8 20.♘d3 ♔b7 21.♘b4! Stopping ...a6 and further attacking the weak light squares.

LENNART OOTES

They both know Black is completely lost. Awonder Liang will soon resign. Sam Shankland patiently awaits the greatest moment in his career so far.

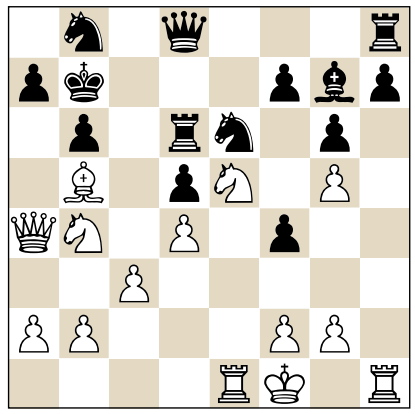


21...♕d8

Black semi-desperately looks for counterplay against the g5-pawn, but I was ready for this one.

The machine wants to expel White's knight immediately with 21...a5, but after 22.♘d3, Black can no longer play ...a7-a6, so the bishop will be on b5 for the rest of the game, dominating the b8-knight. Furthermore, b2-b4 is on the cards. Black is dead lost.

22.♘e5! Well calculated. Black would love to trade his useless bishop for the e5-knight, but he can't, and otherwise the twin threats of ♘xf7 and ♘ec6 are hard to meet.



22...♕c7

22...♗xe5 23.dxe5! leaves the d6-rook embarrassed. If it tries to get a free square on e6, White has a nice queen sac to finish the game: 23...♘c5 24.exd6! ♘xa4 25.♖e7+ ♔c8 (25...♔a8 26.♘c6 ♘xc6 27.♗xc6+ ♔b8 28.♖b7+ ♔c8 29.d7+) 26.♖c7+ ♕xc7 27.dxc7. Material has been equalized and Black will lose a piece.

22...♘xg5 is met by 23.♘ec6, and

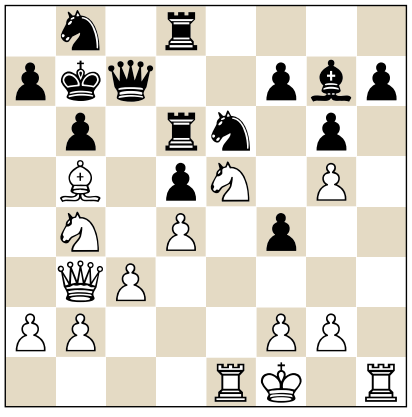
St. Louis 2018 — **cat. XVII**

					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12		TPR
1	Sam Shankland	IGM	USA	2671	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	8½	2884
2	Fabiano Caruana	IGM	USA	2804	½	*	½	½	1	1	0	1	½	1	1	1	8	2836
3	Wesley So	IGM	USA	2786	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	6½	2728
4	Hikaru Nakamura	IGM	USA	2787	½	½	½	*	½	½	0	½	½	½	1	½	5½	2663
5	Aleksandr Lenderman	IGM	USA	2599	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	0	1	½	½	1	5½	2680
6	Ray Robson	IGM	USA	2660	0	0	½	½	½	*	1	1	½	0	1	½	5½	2674
7	Zviad Izoria	IGM	USA	2599	0	1	½	1	½	0	*	½	0	½	½	½	5	2644
8	Jeffery Xiong	IGM	USA	2665	½	0	½	½	1	0	½	*	½	½	½	½	5	2638
9	Awonder Liang	IGM	USA	2552	0	½	½	½	0	½	1	½	*	½	0	½	4½	2619
10	Yaroslav Zherebukh	IGM	USA	2640	0	0	0	½	½	1	½	½	½	*	½	½	4½	2611
11	Varuzhan Akobian	IGM	USA	2647	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	½	1	½	*	1	4½	2610
12	Alexander Onischuk	IGM	USA	2672	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	3	2498

threats like ♕xa7 or ♖e7 are not so easy to deal with!

23.♕b3! The final finesse. White simply attacks the d5-pawn, which cannot be defended without losing control of f7 or h7.

23...♖hd8 After 23...♗xe5 24.♖xe5, the pawn on d5 will fall and Black will lose.



24.♖xh7! The last piece enters the game with authority. In addition to all of Black's previous problems, he is now a clean pawn down as well.

24...a6 25.♗d3 ♔a7

Black wanted to get ...a5 in, but was unable to do so:

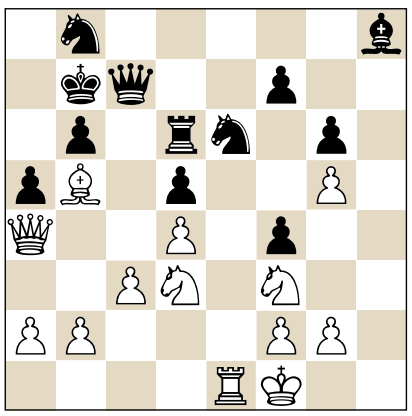
25...a5? 26.♘xd5! ♖xd5 27.♗e4 and White wins the house.

26.♕a4! Provoking the pawn to a5.

26...a5 27.♗b5!

And the bishop is back. The knight on b8 is once again dominated.

27...♔b7 28.♘bd3 ♖g8 29.♘f3 ♖h8 30.♖xh8 ♗xh8

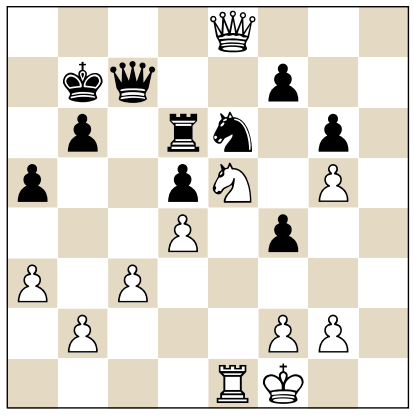


I could have finished the game in any number of ways, but I felt no need to rush, since the h8-bishop and b8-knight were hardly intimidating!

31.a3 Obviously preparing b4. But what is Black to do about it?

31...♘c6 White can win in many ways, but I chose a simplifying sequence to pick up a second pawn and swap a bunch of pieces.

32.♗xc6+ ♖xc6 33.♘de5 ♗xe5 34.♘xe5 ♖d6 35.♕e8



Now f7 falls as well. The rest requires no comment.

35...♖d8 36.♕xf7 ♘xg5 37.♕xc7+ ♔xc7 38.♘xg6 f3 39.♘f4 ♔c6 40.gxf3 ♘xf3 41.♖e6+ ♔b5 42.♔e2 ♘g1+ 43.♔d3

Black resigned.

Finally US Champion! I had dreamt of this moment for as long as I could remember, and I was glad to play a strong final game to clinch the title, a 2700+ rating, $ 50,000, and the satisfaction of playing the best tournament of my career so far.

■ ■ ■

The Women

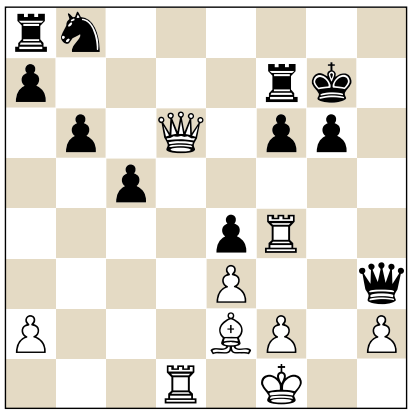
The US Women's Championship is another tournament that is almost impossible to compare to the one only a few years ago. There was a nine-year period in which the only two people winning the tournament were Anna Zatonskih and Irina Krush, with Tatev Abrahamyan coming in second or third relatively often. The winning scores were something brutal like 8/9 or 8½/9. Some results were not much of a contest, with Krush and her near 2500 rating sometimes playing a player who hadn't even reached 2000. But boy, that is not the case anymore.

The surge of women's chess in the United States in the past few years is indescribable. The addition of Nazi Paikidze, transferring from the Georgian federation after living here for many years, has certainly been a bolster to our ranks, but the upcoming strength is even more formidable. Two names really gave me high hopes for excellent finishes. Though Jennifer Yu did a great job, recovering from a rough 0-2 start, it was Annie Wang that won the hearts of fans around the world. Whereas Yu is a fiery and creative player, Wang strikes me as a solid bulwark that takes advantage of her opponent's mistakes.

The standings after the first half were quite surprising to many: Wang in the lead, Paikidze trailing by half a point. Krush and Zatonskih were always outside threats, but were never seriously in contention for first place.

Wang proved to be an enormously resourceful player, turning around lost positions in Rounds 7 and 8 against Sharevich and Krush. Some might regard these games as pretty lucky, and they were, but without the tenacity to offer pitfalls to your opponent, this luck never comes.

Anna Sharevich
Annie Wang
St. Louis 2018 (7)



position after 28...♕h3+

29.♔g1

After a crazy opening, Wang is in serious trouble. She is underdeveloped and her king faces a strong attack, as ♗c4 is winning. Most moves are equivalent to resigning, but she plays a slight trap: **29...♘a6!** Most cunning.

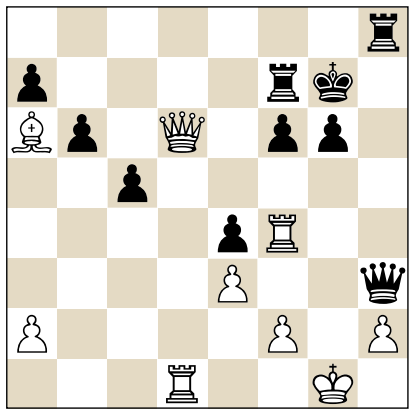
30.♗xa6

30.♗c4 ♖af8 is certainly winning.

30.♗f1! is the best: 30...♕h5 (30...♕c8 31.♗c4, winning) 31.♗xa6 doesn't have

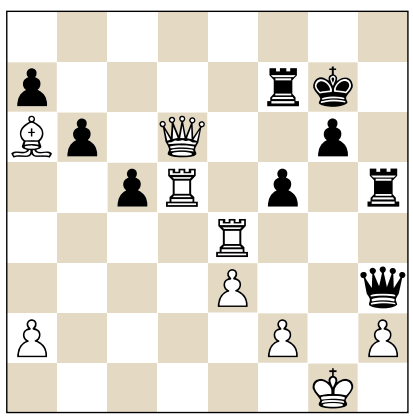
the problems that the game continuation had.

30...♖h8



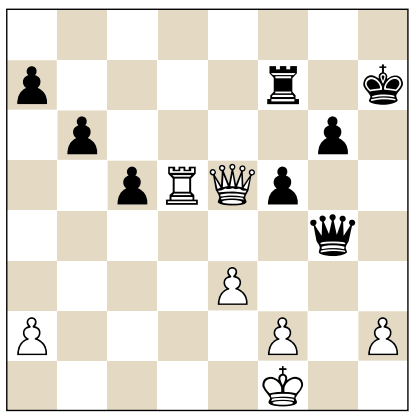
31.♖xe4?! 31.♕c6 is good enough for a decisive advantage, but things are starting to get a bit murky and no one wants to go around running with her king when it was in no danger only two moves ago.

31...♖h5! 32.♖d5 f5



Suddenly White is facing many threats.

33.♕e5+ ♔h7 34.♗e2? 34.♕f4 g5 35.♕e5 fxe4 36.♖d8 is really murky after 36...♕xh2+ 37.♕xh2 ♖xh2 38.♔xh2 ♖xf2+ 39.♔g3 ♖xa2, but White should never lose this endgame. **34...♖g5+ 35.♖g4 ♖xg4+ 36.♗xg4 ♕xg4+ 37.♔f1**



LENNART OOTES

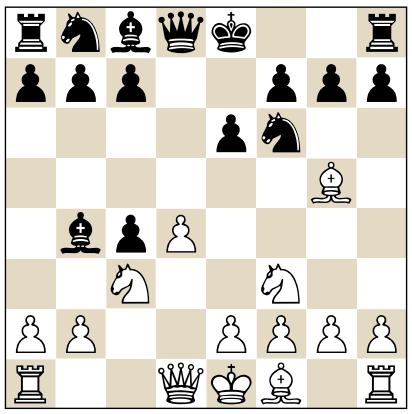
The tie-break between Nazi Paikidze and Annie Wang ended with an Armageddon game, where Paikidze decidedly clinched her second title in the US Women's Championship.

Black is up a pawn, and even though the game is far from over, she played a good endgame and won.

With these wins Wang was simply tearing the Championship asunder, but Paikidze was not giving up. This was her game against defending champion Sabina-Francesca Foisor.

Sabina-Francesca Foisor
Nazi Paikidze
St. Louis 2018 (8)
Queen's Gambit Declined, Vienna Variation

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♘c3 ♗b4 5.♗g5 dxc4

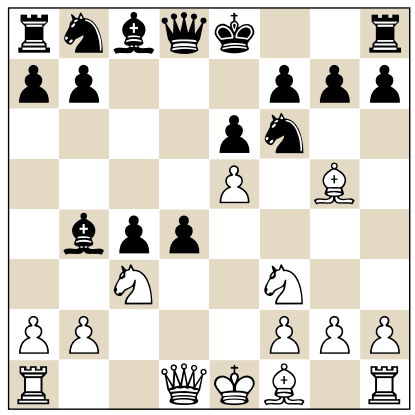


It's hard to prepare against Paikidze. First, she is not a regularly active player, so the amount of recent games she has in the database is pretty small. Second, she can just about play any surprise, even sharp lines. According to my quick search, she has never essayed this line before.

6.e4 c5 7.e5

7.♗xc4 is where the focus of this variation is now, and has been for quite a few years: 7...cxd4 8.♘xd4 ♗xc3+ 9.bxc3 ♕a5 10.♗b5+ ♘bd7 11.♗xf6 ♕xc3+, following Karjakin-Aronian from this year's Candidates, among 300 other grandmaster level games.

7...cxd4



8.exf6?!

Not a good time to forget your theory. 8.♕a4+ ♘c6 9.0-0-0 ♗d7 is some very complicated stuff that I believe

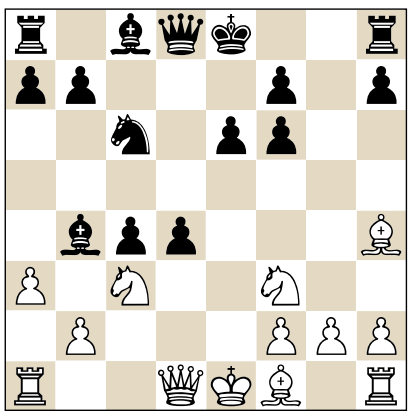
‘USA is a team to watch out for in the ladies’ section in Batumi, without a doubt.’

is fine for Black, but I’m sure the last word has not been spoken about it.

8...gxf6 9.♗h4

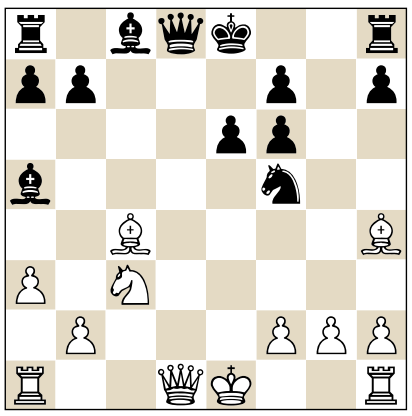
9.♕a4+ ♘c6 10.0-0-0 fxg5 11.♘xd4 ♗d7 12.♘xc6 ♗xc3 13.bxc3 ♕e7! is a pretty tactic that gives Black a strong advantage. It isn’t forced, but Black stands well regardless.

9...♘c6 10.a3



Hindsight is 20/20, and it allows me to say that the bishop is better placed on a5 than on b4. First, because it never gets hit when White recaptures on c3 in some lines – in others, the bishop is already protected against ♕a4+.

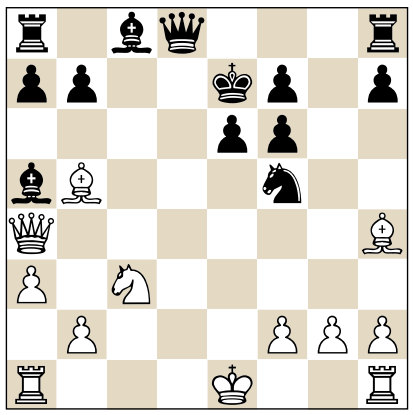
10...♗a5 11.♘xd4 ♘xd4 12.♗xc4 ♘f5



This is a great example of how dubious a3 was.

13.♗b5+ ♔e7 14.♕a4

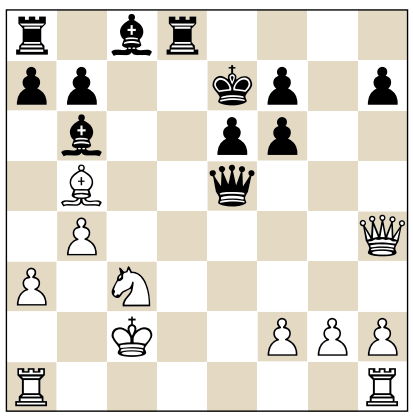
As the saying goes, Black has the pawn and the compensation. The king on e7 is surprisingly much safer than its counterpart until it castles, and that move has not been played yet.



14...♘xh4

14...a6 15.♗e2 b5 16.♕e4 ♕c7 is some computer line that is winning, but murkier. That is one thing about Paikidze – she’s very pragmatic, and although she calculates well when forced to, even while calculating she tends to always be practical.

15.♕xh4 ♕d5 16.b4 ♕e5+ 17.♔d2 ♖d8+ 18.♔c2 ♗b6



Bishop pair, extra pawn, safer king. The rest is easy for Black.

19.♕xh7 ♗d4 20.♖ad1 ♕c7 21.♖d3 e5 22.f4 ♗e6 23.fxe5 ♗xe5 24.♖e1 ♖ac8 25.♖ee3 a6 26.♗a4 ♕c4 27.♖xd8 ♕a2+ 28.♔d1 ♖xd8+ 29.♖d3 ♗g4+

White resigned.

Following several twists and turns, including a last-round loss by Annie Wang to Sabina-Francesca Foisor, Wang and Paikidze finished in shared first place. Both players were certainly deserving of the top place, as I felt that their play was ahead of any other player in the tournament. Now a play-off was to decide on the title. Despite the first game going convincingly to Wang, Paikidze was dominant in Game 2 and absolutely tore her opponent apart with the exact same variation in the Armageddon to take her second Championship.

Even though Wang didn’t win the event, and even failed to qualify for the Olympiad team, she had a great performance and I look forward to her future in chess. The only thing that worries me is that she is being pulled in many different directions. During the tournament, she had Advanced Placement High School tests to study for, so she did that instead of preparing! Jennifer Yu did qualify for the team, and she will be an incredibly strong addition, since Tatev Abrahamyan has also returned after being uncomfortable playing in Baku two years ago due to the political tension between the host country and her place of birth. With the addition of these two players, USA will without a doubt be a team to watch out for in the ladies’ section in Batumi. ■

St. Louis 2018 women — **cat. IV**

					TPR
1	Nazi Paikidze	IM	2352	8	2492
2	Annie Wang	FM	2321	8	2495
3	Irina Krush	IGM	2422	7	2414
4	Anna Zatonskih	IM	2444	6½	2382
5	Jennifer Yu	FM	2367	6½	2389
6	Tatev Abrahamyan	WGM	2366	5½	2327
7	Sabina-Francesca Foisor	WGM	2308	5	2307
8	Anna Sharevich	WGM	2281	4½	2273
9	Akshita Gorti	FM	2252	4½	2276
10	Maggie Feng	FM	2243	4½	2277
11	Rusudan Goletiani	IM	2306	3½	2203
12	Dorsa Derakhshani	IM	2306	2½	2126

tie-break: Paikidze-Wang 2-1

PARDUBICE 12th – 29th JULY 2018, CZECH REPUBLIC

29th CZECH OPEN 2018

INTERNATIONAL CHESS AND GAMES FESTIVAL

- **Rating tournaments with rating for FIDE**
  (open GM tournament, 4 FIDE opens, 4-member team tournament)
- **Rapid tournaments**
- **Blitz tournaments** (including marathon, super blitz 2 × 3 min)
- **Untraditional chess disciplines** (problem solving competition, Fischerandom chess, Bughouse, Raindropchess, Polgar Superstar Chess, Basque chess)
- **Tournaments in other games**

Total price fund of the festival more than 25 000 EUR
Accommodation from 12 EUR, meals in restaurants from 4 EUR

WWW.CZECHOPEN.NET

More detailed information: AVE-KONTAKT s.r.o., Strossova 236, 530 03 Pardubice, Czech Republic
tel. + 420 – 466 535 200, mobile phone + 420 - 608 203 007, e-mail: j.mazuch@avekont.cz

AVE-KONTAKT

CZECHTOUR2018

18th International Chess Festivals Series

CHESS SUMMER IN THE HEART OF EUROPE

12.–29. 7. 2018	**29th CZECH OPEN (Pardubice)**	Chess and Games Festival
3.–10. 8. 2018	**5th SUMMER PRAGUE OPEN**	Open IM tournament and FIDE rating tournament
11.–18. 8. 2018	**21st OLOMOUC CHESS SUMMER**	Round robin GM and IM tournaments, s eniors tournament 60+, FIDE rating tournament

CHESS SUMMER ON SUNNY BEACH

6.–15. 9. 2018	**17th SUNNY BEACH OPEN (BULGARIA)**	2 FIDE rating tournaments, seniors 60+, children U14

More detailed information: AVE-KONTAKT s.r.o., Strossova 236, 530 03 Pardubice, Czech Republic
Tel. + 420 – 466 535 200, mobile phone + 420 - 608 203 007, e-mail: j.mazuch@avekont.cz

www.czechtour.net

SHORT

WHY I AM RUNNING FOR FIDE PRESIDENT

'A week is a long time in politics' – Harold Wilson

As I write, it has only been a few days since I announced my candidacy for the FIDE Presidency. So many things have happened that it feels like an eternity. This column offers a snapshot from a particular moment in time. Thoughts, feelings and, most importantly, events will have moved on in unexpected directions since then.

To be honest, I had not been thinking at all about this prospect until someone unexpected proposed it to me about a month and a half ago. Why should I? FIDE elections, in recent decades, have been like stepping into the boxing ring, hoping for a fair fight under the Marquess of Queensberry rules, but finding oneself kneed in the groin and whacked by knuckle-dusters. My initial reaction was therefore 'no, thank you very much'. But FIDE has fallen to such a low ebb that I felt the chess world deserved a better choice than the two dreadful candidates on offer. Someone else, with the interests of the game truly at heart, had to come forward.

But it is highly unlikely I would have done so had it not been for the circumstance of the great rift between Kirsan Ilyumzhinov and his Deputy, Georgios Makropoulos. Loathed by all but his closest circle, but feared by many, the sneering, cynical Greek has, for the most part, pulled the strings within FIDE for the past quarter century. But ever since Kirsan appeared on the US Treasury Department sanctions list, in November 2015, the bond of love between these two first weakened, frayed and then finally snapped – probably irreparably. One should never entirely rule out the possibility of the ointment of money soothing the pains of this tragic bromantic breakdown. But – even taking into account Makro's mercenary nature – this time the breach really does appear final.

Flourishing sports' bodies do not depend upon the whims of individuals, but instead work to attract multiple commercial sponsorships. Makro, however, has never disguised his favoured, dismally limited model for world chess: a wealthy figurehead with himself calling the shots. Since the schism, close FIDE watchers have witnessed the undignified spectacle of Makro unsuccessfully beseeching one rich potentate after another to act as the game's sugar-daddy. He almost cracked it with the Continental President for Asia, Sheikh Sultan bin Khalifa al Nahyan, until being thwarted, at the last minute, by Kirsan's diplomatic leverage with a more senior family member – the Crown Prince. Over twenty bigwigs were flown into the UAE for the grand announcement that never came. Having failed so abjectly in his goal, Makro then had little choice but to offer his own candidacy. It is doubtful he would have gathered sufficient backing from his coterie, had he not offered to move on by 2022 at the latest. Having vehemently opposed term-limits for decades, he now pronounces himself in favour of them. After two heart operations and a battle with cancer, one does not need an actuarial diploma to understand this is no longer such a great act of self-denial.

'FIDE has fallen to such a low ebb that I felt the chess world deserved a better choice than the two dreadful candidates on offer.'

It is a bit rich for members of the Presidential Board (PB), most of whom owe their positions to having voted for Kirsan Ilyumzhinov, to now argue that he is the greatest threat to FIDE's existence. It is true, of course, but it is not as though he has changed much, has he? Kirsan has always been a charlatan and a liar who has used the FIDE Presidency as an adjunct for his own opaque business dealings. But now it is necessary for the PB converts to parrot in unison that he has been a wonderful President who has given so much to chess – if only he had not unfortunately (and unexpectedly) appeared on the US Treasury Department sanctions list. It is a narrative of obvious humbuggery, but it is the only caterpillar-eaten fig-leaf they have remaining.

The Makropoulos-controlled FIDE Presidential Board has had two and a half years to deal with the anticipated fall-out from the US Government's intervention. Its response has been pitifully inadequate. True, they quickly removed Kirsan from responsibility for financial matters, but it should have been clear all along that this

would only prove a temporary remedy. Did they bother to contradict the fiction that Kirsan was suing the US Government for $50 billion? No – because they preferred to pretend that everything was OK. Only when UBS informed FIDE that it would close its accounts by April 30th, 2018, did the panic really start. As Chief Executive Nigel Freeman wrote, no less than eighteen banks refused even to meet with FIDE. Others did, but refused to take its custom. Astonishingly, when the deadline came, FIDE still did not have a fall-back arrangement in place.

Days passed without any information as to the location of the FIDE millions. The entire financial reserves of an organisation of 189 member federations had been transferred somewhere and no one, except a small pro-Makropoulos clique, knew whither. The inner circle were deeply reluctant to reveal anything. 'Where do you think it currently is? Under Nigel Freeman's mattress?' asked the ECF President, Dominic Lawson, in an email to me. This, I should emphasise, was *after* having written to and received a reply from the FIDE Chief Executive. If vague, incomplete information was only grudgingly granted to an official who was fully entitled to know everything, what chance would they disclose anything at all to a political opponent?

I began asking publicly – first in an interview in the *Mumbai Mirror*, and then on Twitter. *The Times* quickly picked up on the whiff of potential impropriety, and other newspapers too. Compelled to respond, Professor Adrian Siegel, the Treasurer, answered in a politically-charged, two-page letter, replete with irrelevancies, deliberate misrepresentations and rank hypocrisy, on the FIDE website. Other than revealing that the money was held in a trust (Where? Under whose control?), the epistle was almost entirely devoid of meaningful content.

Having extracted a reply, I followed up with a restrained missive of detailed technical questions. The change of tone wrong-footed them. Accused of frivolity and a failure to engage in 'rudimentary clarification' of the facts, here – for all to see – was the serious discussion they claimed they were asking for. After a pause of a few days, finally the cabal divulged something worthwhile. Why this could not have been done two weeks earlier, is anyone's guess.

The financial construction described is a slightly complicated one to grasp for laymen – involving a trust, a fiduciary account, Switzerland, the UK and Hong Kong. According to people far better qualified than myself (and with the proviso of not having seen the details, as yet) the arrangement is, most probably, legal. It is cumbersome and expensive, but will enable FIDE to pay money out, although not in. Quite what will happen in Batumi if Kirsan is re-elected, doesn't bear thinking about. Suffice it to say – and without being unduly apocalyptic – it seems unlikely that the governing body of world chess will reach its centenary.

'Makro, however, has never disguised his favoured, dismally limited model for world chess: a wealthy figurehead with himself calling the shots.'

In view of his extraordinary political longevity, it would be unwise to dismiss Kirsan's chances, but the fact of the matter is that the tide has turned strongly against him. Judging by his announced ticket, which was bizarre even by the standards of a very bizarre man, he has lost his political touch, along with his marbles. Besides the usual yak-shit promises about tens of millions for chess, he has included a Thai 'princess' who is not a princess, and a nonexistent person called Glen Stark. It should be noted though that inviting ridicule has never hurt him previously. However, the nomination of several unknowns, with little or no previous connection to chess, has enraged some of his erstwhile stalwart supporters who had hoped for favour. That will cost him a couple of votes, but a far larger factor is his paucity of financial resources, as compared to the previous election, when the presence of outspoken Putin-critic, Garry Kasparov, enabled him to tap into 'patriotic' Russian funds.

For once, there is a great deal of uncertainty about the outcome. Three-horse races have very different dynamics to a straight run-off – a fact not every armchair commentator appears to have grasped yet. But basically the choice is a very simple one: federations can choose either 1) Kirsan – the man who has brought FIDE to the brink of oblivion 2) Makro – the Kirsan-continuity candidate 3) me. Take your pick.

Nigel Short

World Champion again victorious in Gashimov Memorial

Carlsen completes hat-trick in Shamkir

Magnus Carlsen called his play ‘mediocre’. The Norwegian is known for setting high standards for himself, and no doubt his self-criticism was sincere. Still, ‘mediocre’ proved good enough for a 2884 performance and sufficient to maintain a perfect score in the Vugar Gashimov Memorial. As in 2014 and 2015, taking part meant winning. **ERWIN L’AMI** reports from Azerbaijan.

The fifth Gashimov Memorial was an important test for Magnus Carlsen. While the World Champion continues to top the world rankings, others regularly stole the limelight during the last few months. In 2017, we saw both the impressive comeback with several outstanding victories of Levon Aronian, and the rise to the highest regions of Shakhriyar Mamedyarov.

Following Carlsen’s win in Wijk aan Zee last January, it was Fabiano Caruana’s turn. First the American became the official world title Challenger by winning the Candidates in Berlin, and hot on the heels of this success, Caruana finished ahead of the World Champion in the Grenke Classic.

In general it can be said that while

Magnus Carlsen is as dominant as ever in Rapid and Blitz, this is much less the case in classical chess. I was surprised to see predictions for the upcoming match between 'The Two C's' in which Magnus was regarded as the overwhelming favourite. While I am sure he is rightly considered the favourite, I still believe the outcome is far from clear.

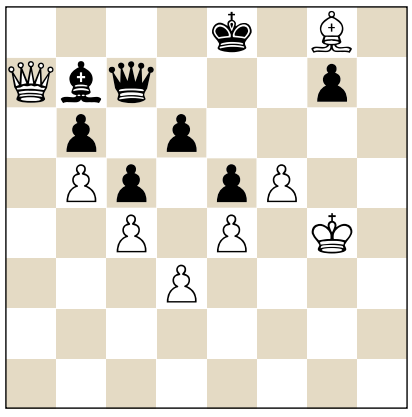
Of course, the Azeri town of Shamkir was a perfect place for Carlsen to demonstrate why he is still the highest-rated player on the planet. He had won both earlier editions that he took part in, and there are good reasons to believe that the Norwegian team feels at ease in Shamkir, where they are always treated like royalty.

Doomsayers

I travelled to Shamkir as Anish Giri's second. After his excellent performance in Wijk aan Zee and two months of working with Vladimir Kramnik before and during the Candidates, Anish also arrived with clear ambitions. Kramnik himself had to cancel his participation in Shamkir just a few weeks before the start due to health issues. That meant that of the participants in the Candidates tournament only Ding Liren, Sergey Karjakin and Shakhriyar Mamedyarov were present in Shamkir. I was particularly interested to see Karjakin's showing, since he had announced after Berlin that he would now focus on getting his rating to 2800 and establishing himself as the undisputed number one player in Russia. Kramnik was replaced by Radoslaw Wojtaszek and the field was completed by David Navara, Rauf Mamedov, Teimour Radjabov and Veselin Topalov.

In the first three rounds, all games ended in draws, causing the usual doomsayers to once again proclaim the end of classical chess as we know it. In their haste they had probably forgotten about the incredibly exciting Candidates event that had just finished, and also to look at the actual games they were lamenting about. Ding Liren, for instance, missed a golden chance in the very first round.

Ding Liren
Radoslaw Wojtaszek
Shamkir 2018 (1)



position after 46.♗g8

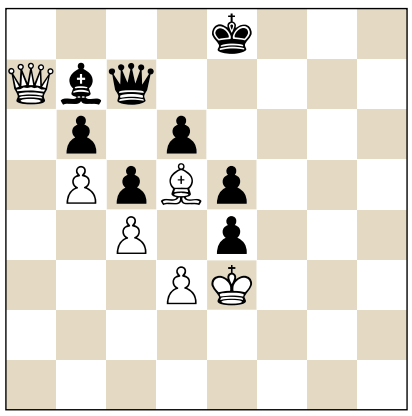
Wojtaszek got outplayed and missed some chances to set up a fortress, only to find himself in this horrible position. However, he finds a last fighting chance.

46...g6! Waiting with 46...♔d8 would lose hopelessly to 47.♗e6 ♔e7 48.♗d5, and Black can resign.

47.♗d5 gxf5+ 48.♔f3 fxe4+

The culmination of the game. Only one move will win.

49.♔e3 And it was not this one. But 49.♔e2! exd3+ 50.♔d2 would have put an end to Black's efforts, since 50...♕d8 51.♕xb7 ♕g5+ 52.♔xd3 allows White to use his bishop to defend against the queen checks, preventing perpetual check.



49...♕d8!!

Suddenly White is caught in a web of perpetual checks!

50.♗xb7 ♕g5+ 51.♔xe4 ♕f4+

51...d5+!? 52.♔xd5 e4+ 53.♔xe4 is similar to the game.

52.♔d5 ♕f3+ 53.♔xd6 ♕f6+ 54.♔d5 ♕f3+ 55.♔xe5 ♕g3+ 56.♔f5 ♕h3+ 57.♔f4 ♕h4+ 58.♔f3 ♕f6+ 59.♔e2 ♕b2+ 60.♔e1 ♕c1+ 61.♔e2 ♕b2+ 62.♔f1 ♕c1+ 63.♔g2 ♕d2+ 64.♔g3 ♕g5+ 65.♔f3 ♕f6+ 66.♔e3 ♕d4+ 67.♔e2

Draw agreed.

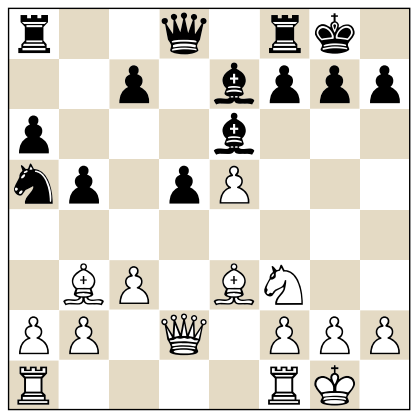
This was not the only missed opportunity, because Veselin Topalov short-changed himself twice by not converting winning positions in Rounds 2 and 3. Third time's a charm, though, and in Round 4 the former World Champion took out Shakhriyar Mamedyarov, chalking up the first win in this edition.

Veselin Topalov
Shakhriyar Mamedyarov
Shamkir 2018 (4)
Ruy Lopez Open

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♘xe4

One reason why I think Shakhriyar Mamedyarov has made a jump of late is his improved opening preparation. The Open Spanish is one of the pillars of his repertoire.

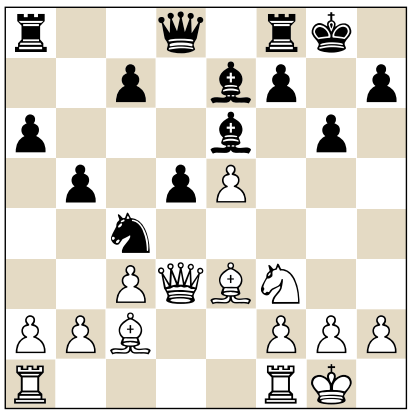
6.d4 b5 7.♗b3 d5 8.dxe5 ♗e6 9.♗e3 ♗e7 10.c3 0-0 11.♘bd2 ♘xd2 12.♕xd2 ♘a5



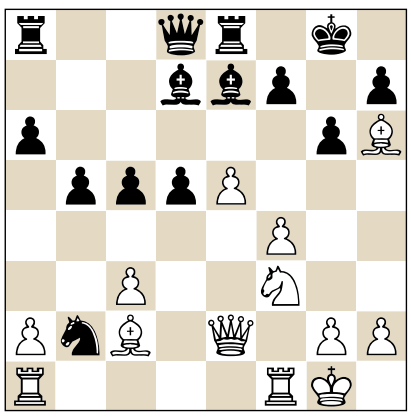
13.♗c2

White used to be considered better after 13.♘d4 ♘c4 14.♗xc4 dxc4 15.f4, but these days the computer simply goes 15...♗d7, preparing ...c5

and ...♗c6, when Black is very fine.
13...♘c4 14.♕d3 g6

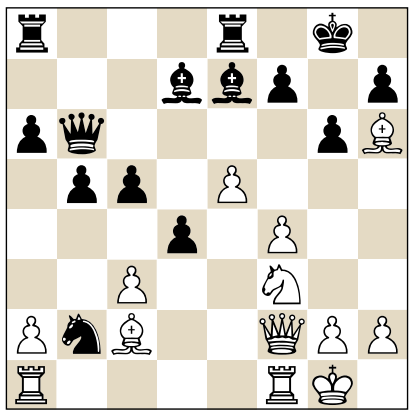


15.♗h6!?
Some people would go 15.♗c1 here, but Topalov certainly doesn't belong to that category! The game continuation entails a long-term pawn sacrifice that White is confident will result in a slow attack against the black king. Objectively, this may not be the right way to play, but one thing I recall from my time working with Topalov is that he would often emphasize that defending is more difficult than attacking!
15...♘xb2 16.♕e2 ♖e8 17.♘d4
Obviously, the materialistic 17.♗xg6 hxg6 18.♕xb2, when Black has easy play, is not the point of White's plan.
17...♗d7 18.f4 c5 19.♘f3

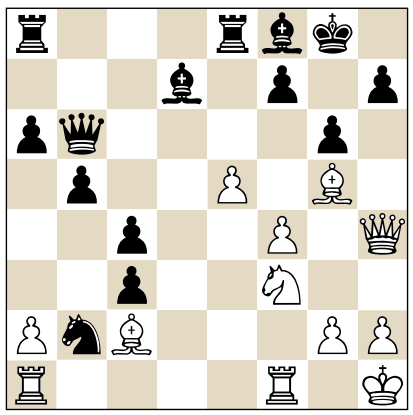


19...♕b6
Here, 19...d4! 20.cxd4 cxd4 21.♗e4 ♘c4 is a very strong exchange sacrifice that probably refutes White's idea. The idea is to meet 22.♗xa8 with the intermezzo 22...♗c5 23.♕e4 ♕xa8 24.♕xa8 d3+ 25.♔h1 ♖xa8, with a huge advantage in the endgame.
20.♕f2 d4

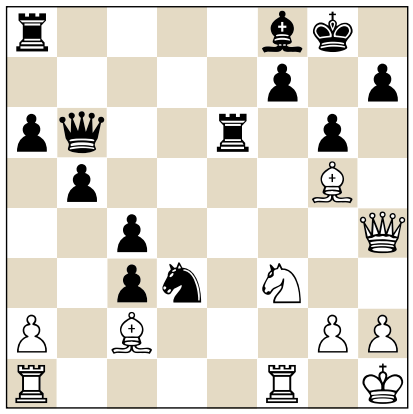
'One thing I recall from my time working with Topalov is that he would often emphasize that defending is more difficult than attacking!'



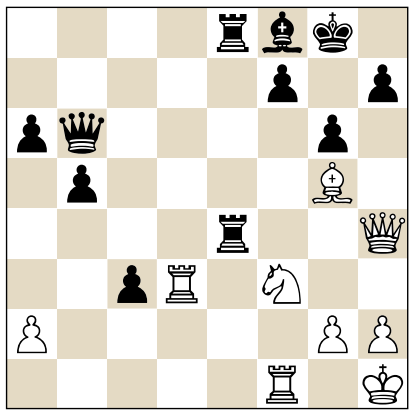
21.♗g5!
A very important move, giving the White queen access to h4 whilst not minding the exchange of the strong defender on e7.
21...dxc3
21...d3 22.♗xe7 ♖xe7 23.♗b3 ♘a4 24.♗xa4 bxa4 25.♘d2 gives White excellent compensation, with the knight momentarily jumping into Black's position. And so does 21...♗c6 22.♗xe7 ♖xe7 23.♕h4 ♕d8 24.♘g5 h5 25.♕g3! d3 26.♗d1 ♘xd1 27.♖axd1 c4 28.f5, with all three results still possible.
22.♕h4 I like 22.♖ae1!, simply piling up on the kingside. Even the mighty engine has to change its mind here and admit White's compensation is very real after 22...♗d8!? (22...♗f8 23.f5! is already curtains) 23.♗xd8 (23.♕h4 ♘d3! 24.♗xd3 c4+!) 23...♕xd8 24.♘g5, when I think we'd all rather be White.
22...c4+ 23.♔h1 ♗f8



24.f5 This allows Black to shut out the bishop on c2. At this point, 24.♗e4 was called for, when, if Black raises the stakes with 24...♘d3, White will do the same with 25.f5!. The position is hugely complicated and the cold 0.00 I am seeing on my screen definitely doesn't do it justice.
24...♘d3 25.e6 ♗xe6 26.fxe6 ♖xe6

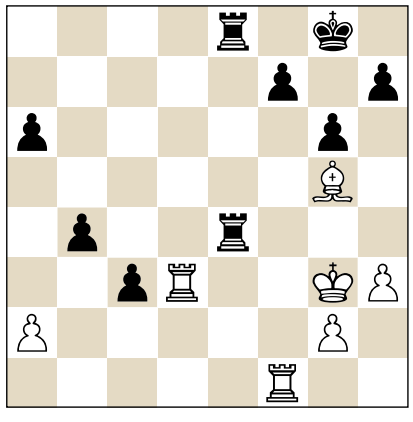


Shakh has happily given up a piece to ward off the attack. It's clear that with so many passed pawns Black should be doing well.
27.♖ad1 ♖ae8 28.♗xd3 cxd3 29.♖xd3 ♖e4
The first step in the wrong direction. The direct 29...b4 was called for. Passed pawns must be pushed!

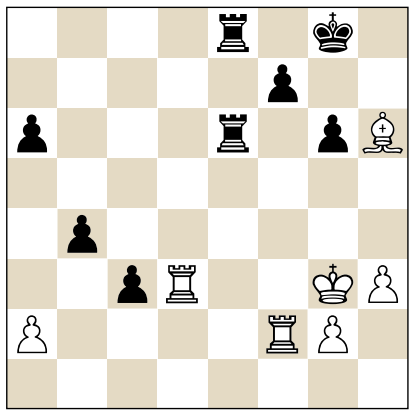


30.♗f4! Freeing the g5-square for the knight. It's very possible that Shakhriyar had underestimated this response, which brings Topalov back into the game.

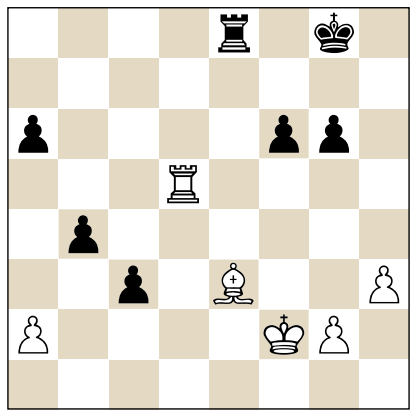
30...♗e7 31.♕g3 b4 32.♘g5 ♗xg5 33.♗xg5
Obviously, it is a huge concession to give up the strong bishop, and parting with it more or less nullifies Black's winning chances.
33...♕e6 34.h3 ♕e5 35.♔h2 ♕xg3+ 36.♔xg3



36...h6!?
This is correct, freeing the e7-square for the rook in case of ♖d7. However, Shakh's follow-up makes me think he had lost the plot at this point.
37.♗xh6 ♖e1
37...a5! was the way forward, referring to my earlier note on passed pawns.
38.♖f6 ♖1e6 39.♖f2
39.♖xe6 ♖xe6 40.♗e3 is technically winning, since 40...c2 (40...a5 is just too slow now, and White wins with 41.♖d8+ ♔h7 42.♔f3 a4 43.♖c8!, controlling the passed pawns) can be met by 41.♖d8+ ♔h7 42.♗d4!, threatening mate in one and giving White time to go ♖c8 next.



39...♖e2 The notes to White's 39th move show how important it is for Black to act fast before his passed pawns get controlled. This was the last chance for 39...a5, when the game should still be within drawing margins. With his next two moves Shakhriyar crosses this line.
40.♖d5 ♖xf2 41.♔xf2 f6 42.♗e3



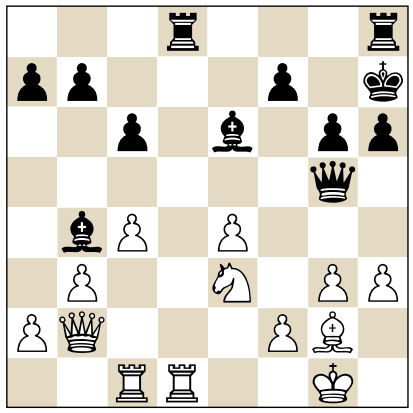
Black resigned.
The win is indeed not so difficult, as White will bring his king over to d3 and start picking up Black's queenside pawns. A fascinating game!

After this loss Mamedyarov, who won the tournament both in 2016 and 2017, never really bounced back. It was not until Round 8 that he got back to 50%, which was obviously not enough to fight for the top spots. For Topalov, his win was the start of what looked like becoming a great event, when he also defeated Navara with the black pieces the next day.

ETERI KUBLASHVILI

With the relaxed attitude that he prefers these days, Veselin Topalov is an unpredictable force. After 6 rounds he topped the table, then he lost his last three games.

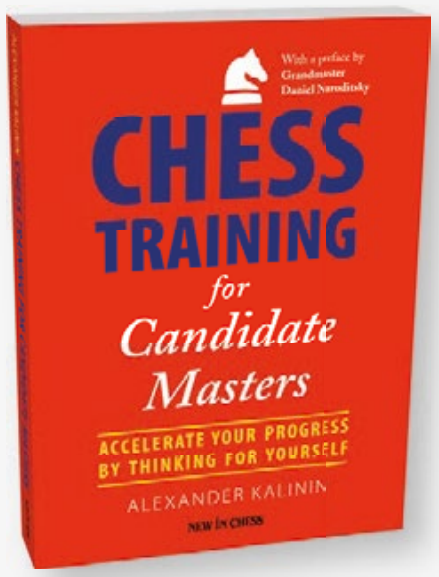
David Navara
Veselin Topalov
Shamkir 2018 (5)



position after 26...♖d8

27.a3 Although I do see that the bishop pair should offer Black some compensation for the pawn, I'd take White here any day of the week and play 27.♔h2, preparing for the advance of the f-pawn, when White should have a risk-free game. Instead, the game continuation weakens the queenside, which will cost White dearly.
27...♖xd1+ 28.♖xd1 ♗c5 29.♘f1
Allowing Black to seize the initiative. It's remarkable how quickly things go downhill for Navara in the next couple of moves.
29...♖d8 30.h4 ♕e7 31.♖xd8 ♕xd8 32.b4 ♕d4!

HOW TO IGNORE YOUR COMPUTER AND THINK FOR YOURSELF



"Sasha Kalinin has an acute understanding of what modern chess players struggle with and what they must do in order to improve."
GM Daniel Naroditsky

"A book that makes you think. It's a relief that the author aims at imagination and plans rather than on endless variations with a blunt final verdict."
Florian Jacobs, Max Euwe Centre Amsterdam

"An excellent book with a very large scope, and I do believe in Kalinin's classical approach while using modern resources."
Gerard Rill, Schakers.info

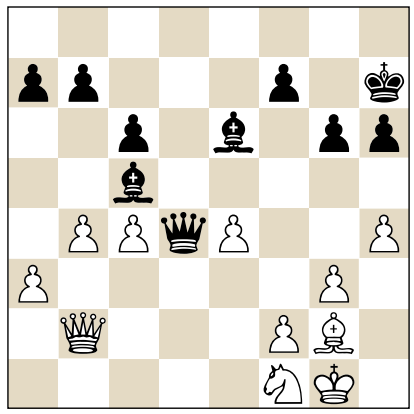
"Extremely interesting! As the blurb promises, the bulk of this training material has never been published before and there is some fascinating analysis on all areas of the game."
GM Matthew Sadler, former British Champion

"The examples have been selected with an expert eye for instructional value. The contents are easy to understand, intuitive directions are easy to remember, reading the book is fun."
IM Frank Zeller, Schach Magazine

"The games, positions and exercises are held together by a rather gripping narrative."
Ian Marks, Chess Scotland

---

208 pages | €18.95 | available at your local (chess)bookseller or at www.newinchess.com

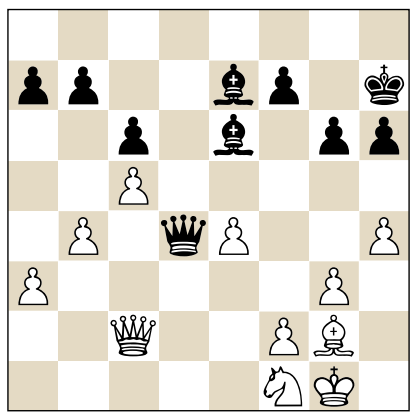


Emphasizing the weaknesses on the queenside.

33.♕c2

The computer suggestion is 33.♕xd4 ♗xd4 34.♘e3 ♗xe3 35.fxe3 ♗xc4 36.e5. And it may well have been time for such desperate measures.

33...♗e7 34.c5



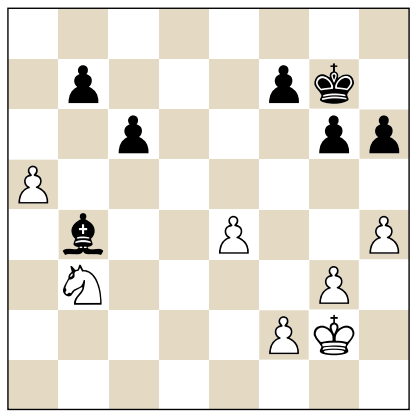
34...a5! Black's advantage is already of giant proportions.

35.bxa5

35.♕b1 a4! fixes the weakness on a3.

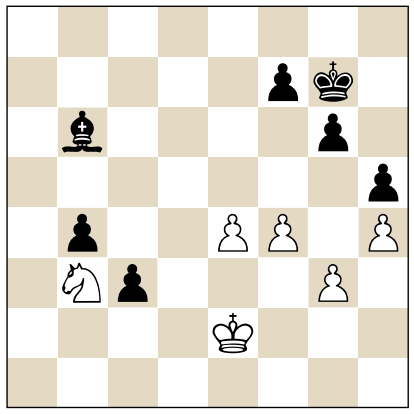
35...♗xc5 36.a4 ♔g7 37.♘h2 ♗b3 It never rains but it pours. The bishop is obviously taboo because of mate in two.

38.♕e2 ♕xa4 39.♘f3 ♕a1+ 40.♗f1 ♕c3 41.♔g2 ♗a4 42.♕c4 ♕xc4 43.♗xc4 ♗c2 44.♘d2 ♗b4 45.♗b3 ♗xb3 46.♘xb3



Despite some minor inaccuracies along the way, Black has now reached a winning endgame. The remainder is straightforward.

46...c5 47.♔f3 c4 48.♘d4 ♗xa5 49.♘b5 c3 50.♘d4 b5 51.♔e2 b4 52.f4 ♗b6 53.♘b3 h5!



Fixing the pawns on the squares of the bishop's colour. White resigned.

Bitcoins and fake news

Meanwhile, Magnus Carlsen had mainly made headlines for not attending the press conference after his draw against Rauf Mamedov in Round 4. The press conferences were once again led by chess legend Ljubomir Ljubojevic. Ljubo's enthusiasm for the game remains incredible, and I think most players appreciated the presence of a kindred spirit, even though his approach to the press conferences was somewhat unorthodox. After the players had gone through their games he would switch to questions about real-world issues. What did the players think of Bitcoin? Did they believe there are aliens out there? How would they react to being robbed? And how to deal with fake news? After making his fourth draw in a row it was all a bit too much for our World Champion...

But the next day Magnus was to break the spell in his game against Radoslaw Wojtaszek. His second Peter Heine Nielsen takes us through what I thought was Carlsen's best game of the tournament.

NOTES BY
Peter Heine Nielsen

Magnus Carlsen
Radoslaw Wojtaszek
Shamkir 2018 (5)
Sicilian Defence, Hungarian Variation

The tournament in general, but for Magnus especially, had a very quiet start. The pairings gave Magnus three Blacks vs. the Azeri players, which left not much scope for creativity. However, in Round 5 things started to change.

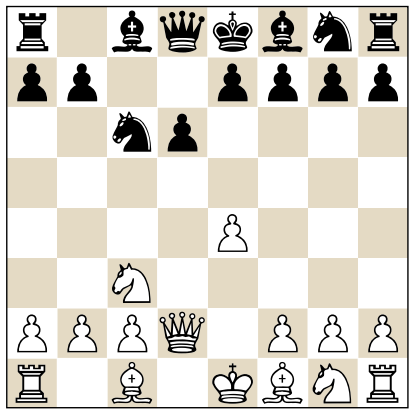
1.e4 c5

Radek stays loyal to his legendary compatriot, inviting his favourite Najdorf Variation.

2.♘c3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♕xd4

A nice, befitting touch, since this move order against the Sicilian was favoured by Vugar Gashimov.

4...♘c6 5.♕d2!?

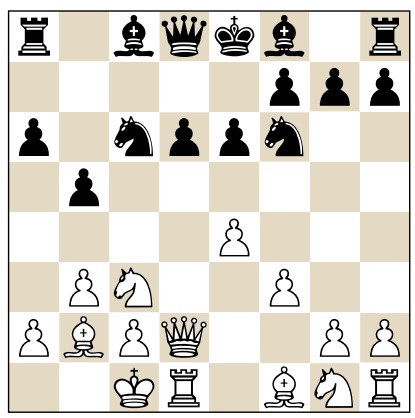


Magnus unleashes a rare and original concept, completely novel at top level. Last year, during Wijk aan Zee, I received an email from Greek IM Ioannis Simeonidis suggesting this set-up as an interesting anti-Najdorf concept and offering Magnus to test his concept! At first it reminded me of Greek *hybris*. After all, how likely is it that you can come up with a meaningful and new set-up at move 5 in one of the historically most tested openings in chess? GM Khenkin, one of the commentators at the event, formulated it with classic Soviet iron chess logic: 'Chess wisdom suggests to move each piece only once in the opening, especially the queen. However, the World Champion seems to have his own rules.'

The first impression, however, is deceptive. White has an interesting concept in mind, and very similar to Fischer-Random Chess, the players now have to adapt to problems previously completely untested in practice.

5...♘f6

Logical and common sense, but Ofitserian took a much more concrete approach when he faced Paravyan in the Russian Junior Championship four days later and harassed the White queen with 5...g6 6.b3 ♗h6!?.



The position is reminiscent of a Rauzer, however with the White bishop being on b2 and the knight on g1 instead of d4! At first this sounds considerably more passive from White's perspective, but the bishop on b2 not only attacks on the long diagonal but also provides additional safety for the White king, while a knight on d4 would just be exchanged and now, on g1, can consider various routes of attack.

'How likely is it that you can come up with a meaningful and new set-up at move 5 in one of the historically most tested openings in chess?'

White, however, did not budge and went 7.f4 ♘f6 8.♗b2 e5 9.g3 0-0 10.0-0-0 and won a complex fight. This is what is most fascinating with Simeonidis' variation, that an oasis of creativity existed in quarters believed to be long mapped out.

6.b3 e6

On the same day in the Budapest Spring Open, but three hours later due to the time-difference, Kotronias faced 6...g6, but got an excellent position after 7.♗b2 ♗g7 8.0-0-0 0-0 9.f3 ♕a5 10.♔b1 ♗e6 11.♘ge2. As in the present game, it is noteworthy that the surprised players act with typical Sicilian moves, while in the game played four days later, Ofitserian, most likely influenced by the computer, tried a set-up aimed specifically at the possible defects of White's concept.

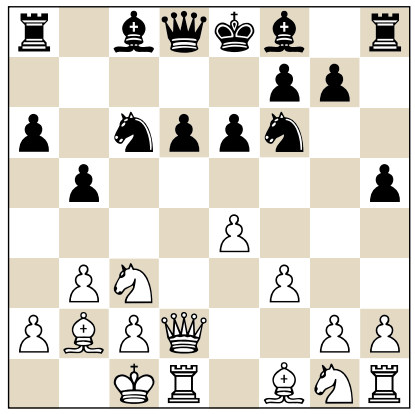
7.♗b2 a6

Again in typical Sicilian style. 7...d5!?, intending ...♗b4, was a more concrete approach.

8.0-0-0 b5 9.f3

9...h5?!

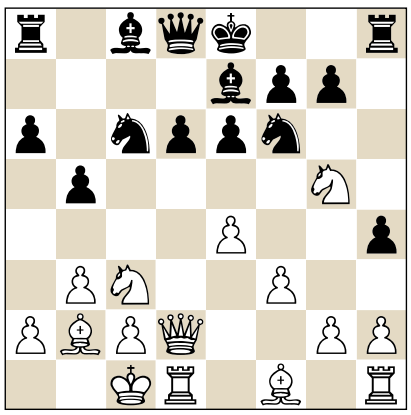
Preventing g4 makes perfect sense, but 9...♗e7 10.g4 ♘xg4! is a nice trick, because 11.fxg4 ♗g5 wins the White queen. 10.♔b1 is the obvious reply, but then, after 10...h5, Black has a slightly improved version of the game.



10.♘h3!

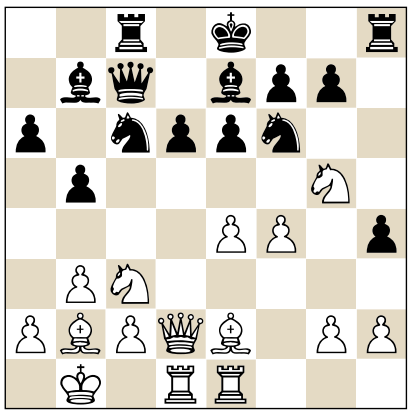
Up until this move, the general concept was mapped out in preparation, but here the World Champion demonstrates his level by adapting to the specifics of the position excellently. The fact that g5 is very rarely a relevant square for a White knight in a Scheveningen-style Sicilian is of no importance. As in Chess960, what matters is adapting to the new situation. And the combination of Black's last move weakening the g5-square and White's knight being on g1 prompted this unusual approach.

10...♗e7 11.♘g5 h4?!



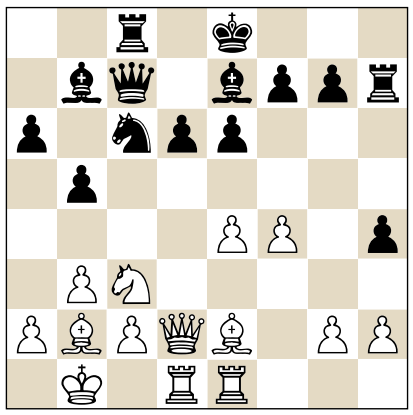
Again logical and typical, but for this specific position just not very relevant.

12.f4 ♗b7 13.♔b1 ♖c8 14.♗e2! ♕c7 15.♖he1!



While White's last two moves might appear unimpressive, ♗e2 even almost feeling passive, looks are again deceptive. White quietly finishes his development, in essence claiming he can improve his position meaningfully before the eventual confrontation, while Black cannot. Black's position is much worse than it looks. Normally ...♘b4 and ...♕a5 would create counterplay, exchange sacrifices on c3 being part of the equation, but with the bishop on b2 such Black action would be completely pointless, and ...♘b4 would simply be met by a3. In particular, the knight at c6 seems misplaced, blocking both the bishop on b7 and the rook on c8. The relevant question would be, why did Black put it there? But who could resist free development harassing the enemy queen at move 4?

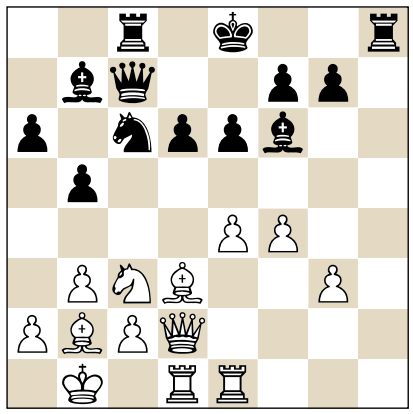
15...♘h7 16.♘xh7 ♖xh7



17.g4?!

At the press conference Magnus explained that he had seen the indeed crushing 17.♘d5!, but thought his position so dominating that sacrifices were not even necessary. Still, the knight sacrifice was the best way, as after 17...exd5 18.exd5 Black's position is close to hopeless. Giving back the piece is positional bankruptcy, but 18...♘b8 loses instantly to 19.♗d3!, with 19...♖h5 20.♖xe7+! being the principal tactical point.

17...hxg3 18.hxg3 ♗f6 19.♗d3 ♖h8

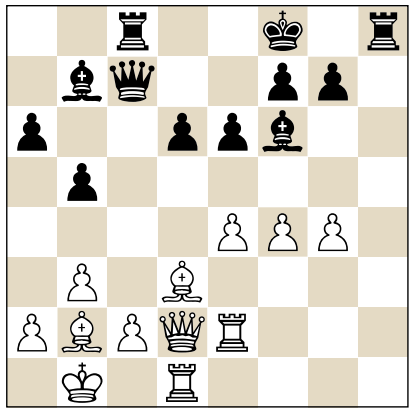


20.g4?!

A strange coincidence. Magnus's only inaccuracy in the game was g4. Unfortunately, it was possible

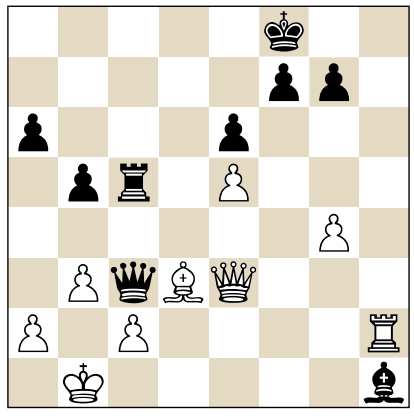
Magnus Carlsen cannot suppress a smile as he sits enjoying the unchartered opening that he has managed to lure Radoslaw Wojtaszek into.

to play it twice! Unlike on move 17, simplicity was in order here. Fighting for the open line with 20.♖h1! would have given an overwhelming edge.
20...♘d4 21.♖e3 ♔f8 22.♘e2! ♘xe2 23.♖xe2



Despite the exchanges of minor pieces, the difference in king safety still gives White the much more

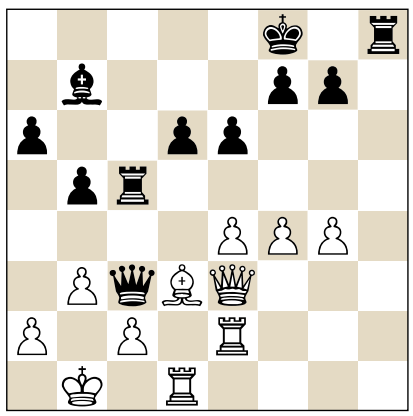
26.e5! dxe5 27.fxe5 ♖h1 28.♖xh1 ♗xh1 29.♖h2



If now 29...♗b7, then 30.♖h8+ ♔e7 31.♕g5+ mates.
29...♖xe5 30.♖h8+! ♔e7 31.♕a7+
And with 32.♖xh1 next, ending up a piece down, Black resigned.
Magnus's shift of pace not only lasted till the upcoming soccer

'Magnus's only inaccuracy in the game was g4. Unfortunately, it was possible to play it twice!'

pleasant position. Now 23...♗xb2 24.♔xb2 ♕c5! was Black's best chance to minimize the damage, but in time-pressure Radek finally goes astray.
23...♗c3? 24.♗xc3 ♕xc3 25.♕e3 ♖c5
This allows a tactical blow, but after 25...♕c5 26.♕g3 Black is passive without counterplay, while f5 and g5 follow for White with an emphatic advantage.



match on the free day, in which he scored all six goals for the winning team, but also for the remainder of the tournament. With crucial wins over first the leading Topalov and then with the black pieces against Anish Giri, he eventually secured overall victory.

■ ■ ■

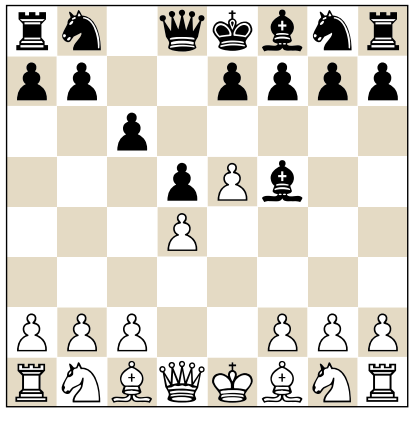
Round 6 was the moment the tournament seemed to spring to life for Anish Giri. After what I kindly referred to as a 'slow start', with lost positions against Ding Liren and Veselin Topalov, Anish had somewhat stabilized in Round 5, with an easy draw with Black against Shakhriyar Mamedyarov.

Here are his notes to his win against David Navara that allowed him to catch up with Magnus Carlsen, half a point behind the leader, Topalov.

NOTES BY
Anish Giri

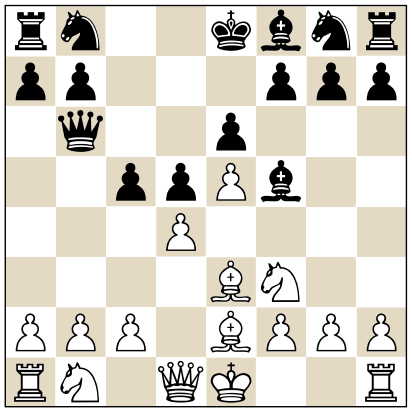
Anish Giri
David Navara
Shamkir 2018 (6)
Caro-Kann, Advance Variation

1.e4 c6
David Navara has a wide variety of openings in his repertoire, but before this game he had already played the Caro-Kann twice in Shamkir, so by this point this was hardly a surprise.
2.d4 d5 3.e5 ♗f5



4.♘f3
Last year alone, I played various systems against the Caro-Kann, including 3.exd5, the 2.♘f3/3.♘c3 system, the Advance Variation as in this game, and the Advance Variation with 4.♘d2, which Carlsen had played against David in Round 2 (½-½, 50).
Having studied all of them in some detail, I occasionally wonder why I would not be ready to start playing Caro-Kann with Black myself, but then I tend to come back to my senses and banish these corrupting thoughts.
4...e6 5.♗e2 c5
The most direct attempt at equalizing. Black has an insane amount of options here, including set-ups with ...h6/...g5 and even the ...♗b4-a5-c7 manoeuvre. The danger for Black is that if he gets carried away with all the manoeuvring involved, he may eventually get squeezed due to lack of space. The systems with ...c5 address this problem immediately.
6.♗e3 ♕b6

The theme of the poisoned pawn has spread from the Najdorf 6.♗g5 variation, and is very relevant here as well. 6...cxd4 7.♘xd4 ♘e7 is another system, recommended by Vidit Gujrathi on his Caro-Kann DVD. It is up to each one of you, my dear reader, to draw your own conclusions about this line.



7.♘c3

I remember first seeing this in a book by Bologan, in which he annotated a game of his which met 7...♕xb2 with 8.♕b1!. Since then, the theory has taken some giant leaps, but time and again, new possibilities pop up in this fascinating variation, which unfortunately is not all that popular at top level.

7...♘c6

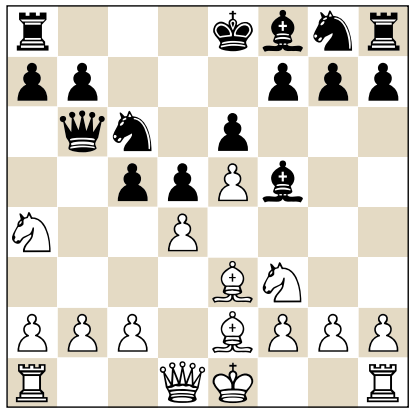
The main theoretical move.

7...♕xb2 8.♕b1 was introduced in Bologan-Palo, 2003. The verdict then changed a few times, but right now it seems that Black generally avoids this.

7...c4!? 8.♖b1 ♗b4 is a highly dubious idea that I discovered together with Erwin l'Ami, who had the guts to actually play it in a tournament game. Needless to say, until the peace treaty was signed in that game, he had all his fans at the edge of their seats. The claim that it is a good version of the French Winawer (since the c8-bishop is outside the pawn chain) is at the very least controversial.

8.♘a4

I didn't feel entirely ready for a theoretical discussion in the 8.0-0 ♕xb2 line, so I decided to go for a sub-line.



8...♕a5+ 9.c3 cxd4

Played very quickly, suggesting that 8.♘a4 had not exactly taken my opponent by surprise. Not too shocking, since there had been a couple of high-profile games already, for example MVL-So, Shamkir (!) 2015.

9...c4 is the alternative, which leads to a strategically complicated position.

A GRANDMASTER AMONG UNIVERSITIES.

If you're interested in playing chess at an American university, we want to hear from you. The University of Texas at Dallas offers highly competitive scholarships to master-level players. For more information, please contact Program Director Jim Stallings at james.stallings@utdallas.edu at least one year in advance of your intended fall enrollment date.

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT DALLAS
CHESS TEAM

chess.utdallas.edu

UT DALLAS

10.♘xd4 ♘xd4 11.♗xd4 ♘e7 12.0-0

12.♕b3 was played by Le Quang Liem in March this year and also seen at the US Championship a few days after this game, where Xiong-Liang continued 12...♕c7 13.♘c5 ♘c6 14.♕xb7 ♕xb7 15.♘xb7 ♘xd4 16.cxd4 (½-½, 30). I had also considered this option, but finally settled on the move in the game.

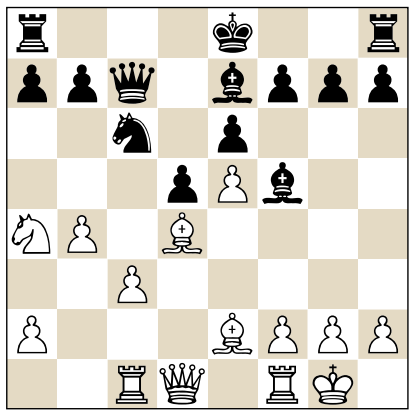
12...♘c6 13.b4 ♕c7 14.♖c1 ♗e7

This move was also seen in Bok-Saltaev, played in the German Bundesliga earlier this year (1-0, 32). Here we had prepared an improvement.

The computer, by the way, offers alternatives to the move 14...♗e7, but I did not expect my opponent to dare me with a move like 14...h6, which at some depth is my computer's top choice.

ETERI KUBLASHVILI

In Round 6, a strong novelty brought Anish Giri victory against David Navara, who blamed the blunder that cost him the game on the four hours he had been preparing the previous day.



15.g4!

A strong novelty, but since the computer immediately points it out, it is hard to take credit for it.

15.b5 was played by Bok, but here both 15...♘xd4 and 15...♘xe5!? are very unclear.

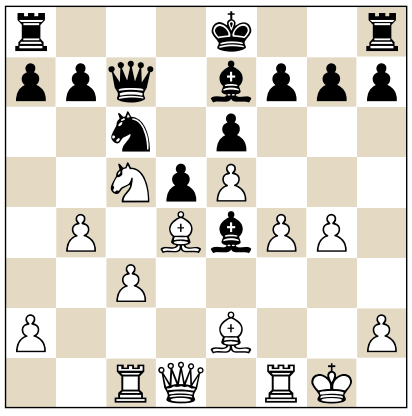
15...♗e4

As so often in the Caro Advance, this move just extends the game by one move, since 15...♗g6 would immediately run into 15.f4.

16.f3 ♗g6 17.f4 ♗e4

Standard. White got f2-f4 essentially for free, but Black has a mighty bishop on e4.

18.♘c5



At a reasonable depth, the computer likes this position for White, but as it seemed rather unclear to me, I had spent some time trying to understand why and how.

18...a5!? David played this very quickly. I don't know where his preparation ended, but I thought that he might be aware of this move. It actually looked rather odd to me, yet I recalled it being the 'first line' of my home computer.

18...0-0 is met with 19.♘xe4 dxe4 20.♗e3!, and White holds all the trumps: the e4-pawn is weak and the black knight is not where it wants to be. Black should probably strike with ...g5!? at some point, but that is somewhat desperate.

Alternatively, 18...♗xc5 secures the e4-bishop, the pride of Black's position, and after 19.♗xc5 h5 he can even take hold of the light squares on the kingside, but it seems that all of that is more than compensated for by the dominating dark-squared bishop on c5, which for the moment prevents Black from castling and can absolutely not be opposed.

19.♗e3

During the game I tried to understand why the computer prefers this move to the natural 19.♗f2, and I decided that it probably has to do with the fact that 19.♗f2 allows ...♗g6, when f5 is no longer killing. In order not to feel totally useless, it is still my general rule that I try to understand the opening moves I make, but essentially it is probably not even required.

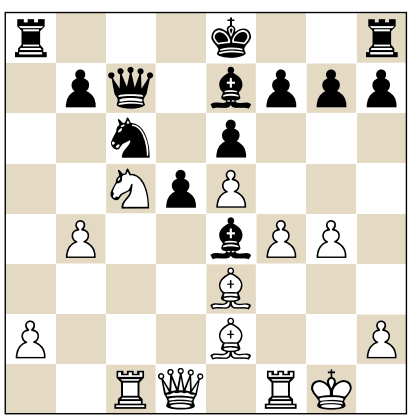
19...axb4

The opening of the c-file looked suicidal to me, given that the c1-rook is going to start flirting with the c7-queen, but during the game I realized that there is also something to be said for it. Also, David

kept playing reasonably quickly, so I couldn't rule out that he was prepared, but when my natural recapture set him thinking, it became clear that he had been improvising for some time already.

19...♗xc5 20.♗xc5 g5!? was a peculiar line that we had analysed. Our machinery was confused at first, but after having studied the lines deeply we realized that this is no less dangerous than it looks. I will spare you the details.

20.cxb4

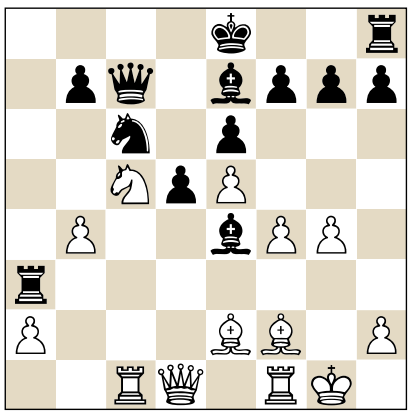


20...♖a3

Very sensible. I now had a choice here between going ♕d2 and playing ♗f2, in both cases expecting ...♕b8 to come, when I felt that I had a lot of ways to try and punish Black for postponing castling for so long. But I also felt that some of those ways were not as good as they looked at first sight.

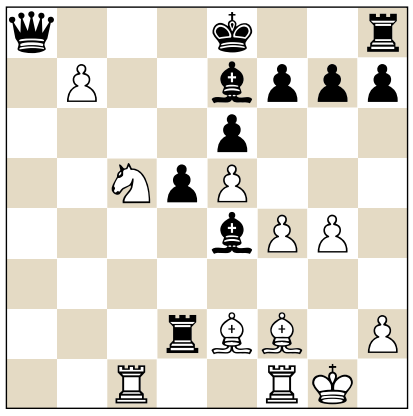
21.♗f2

After 21.♕d2 ♕b8, White has nothing better than 22.♗f2 anyway, transposing to the position discussed below, since 22.b5 is met by 22...♘b4!.



21...♗xc5

Actually, 21...♕b8 has a direct refutation, and a rather pretty one too: 22.♕d2! (covering the b4-square) 22...♕a8 23.b5! (the key move) 23...♖xa2 (23...♘b4 is the most resilient, and now, after 24.♕xb4 b6 25.♕xa3 ♕xa3 26.♘xe4 dxe4 27.♖c8+ ♗d8 28.♖d1, Black has to go 28...♔e7! 29.f5 ♖e8!, and he is most likely lost, but White still has some work to do) 24.bxc6! ♖xd2 25.cxb7



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

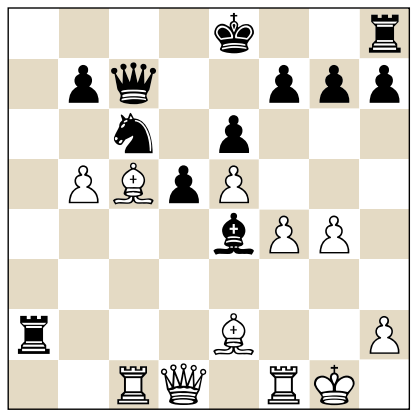
and White wins, the main point being the following cute mate: 25...♕b8 26.♗b5+ ♔d8 27.♘xe6+ fxe6 28.♗b6+, and mate.

22.♗xc5 ♖xa2

My first instinct now was 23.♖a1, trading the active rook, but this wouldn't win by force, since after 23...♖xa1 24.♕xa1 Black has the resource 24...♔d7!, and he can still fight. And when I suddenly saw a couple of cheap tricks in the lines after 23.b5, the child in me had been awakened and I quickly pushed my pawn forward.

23.b5?!

Indeed, 23.♖a1 was not as strong as it looked, but 23.♖f2! was the winning shot. Now the threat of b5 is reinforced and White wouldn't mind simply kicking the rook away with ♕b3.



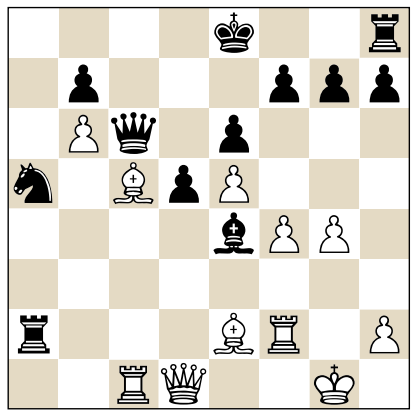
23...♗c2?

It is pretty insane that I even saw this blunder coming, and what's more, considered it highly likely to be played. Besides the b6! shot that was played in the game, there was also the deep 24.♕d2!?, which apparently also wins after 24...♘xe5 25.♗d4!.

To begin with, there was 23...♘e7?. Now White shouldn't be tempted to go after the h8-rook, but instead start with 24.b6!, keeping ♗xe7 and ♖c7 as later options: 24...♕d7 25.♗xe7 ♕xe7 26.♖c8+ ♔d7 27.♖c7+, and wins.

'It is pretty insane that I even saw this blunder coming, and what's more, considered it highly likely.'

But there also was 23...♘a5!. I had clearly under-estimated this move, because Black now has the option of blocking the c-file with ...♘c4!. To begin with, 24.b6 ♕c6 25.♖f2

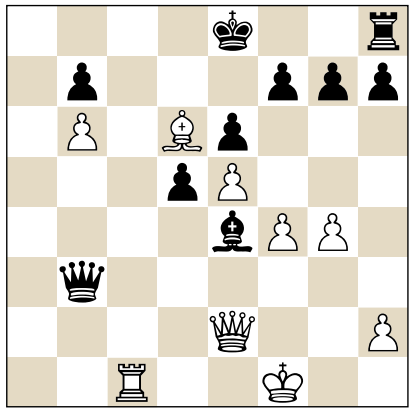


ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

is forced now, and Black has two options:

A) 25...♖xe2!? 26.♖xe2!? ♗f3 27.♕e1! ♘c4! 28.♖a2! ♕xc5+ 29.♕f2 ♕xf2+ 30.♔xf2 ♔d7 31.♔xf3 ♔c6, with good chances for Black to draw the endgame an exchange down.

B) Or 25...♘c4, which looks even stronger, but is met by 26.♗xc4 ♖xf2! 27.♗e2!! ♖g2+ 28.♔f1, and suddenly Black is in great danger again. He now has to find the only moves 28...♖xe2! 29.♕xe2 ♕a4! 30.♗d6 ♕b3!, and now, since ...♗d3 is threatened, it's time for White to do some magic:



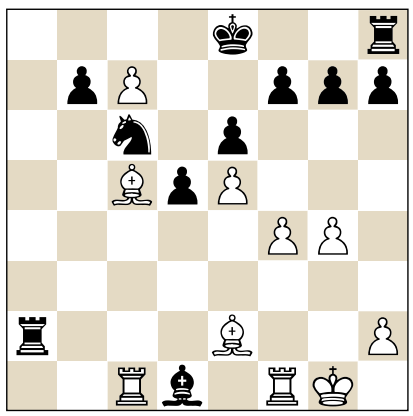
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

31.♔f2! (31.♕f2 f5! will end in a perpetual after White grabs the h8-rook, since the king is too exposed) 31...♕xb6+ 32.♕e3! (32.♔g3 ♔d7!) 32...♕xe3+ 33.♔xe3 ♔d8! 34.♖c7, and White will regain the pawns in this endgame and even have chances to establish some domination.

24.b6!

Paradoxically, it is better for White not to attack the knight on c6 now. The key is that with the moves b6 and ...♕c8 included, White will have a check on a4 after we capture everything on c2 and Black goes ...♘d4.

24...♗xd1 25.bxc7



ETERI KUBLASHVILI

The commentary team was again headed by the inimitable Ljubomir Ljubojevic. Here he is following the games together with Igor Khenkin and former Women's World Champion Nona Gaprindashvili.

Black loses a piece. This reminds me of one of my favourite opening traps from my childhood that goes something like: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 ♗f5 4.♕b3 ♕b6 5.cxd5 ♕xb3 6.axb3 ♗xb1? 7.dxc6! ♗e4? 8.♖xa7! ♖xa7 9.c7! 1-0.

25...♔d7 26.♗xd1 ♔xc7 27.♗d6+ ♔d7 28.♖b1

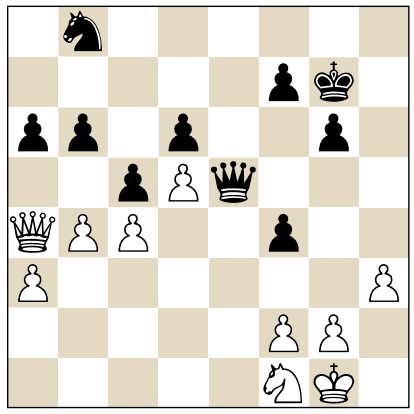
Black resigned.

I read that after the game my (very pleasant and kind!) opponent blamed this loss and his unfortunate blunder on the fact that he had spent four hours preparing for this game and was not fresh. Using this logic, given the amount of hours I had spent preparing on the rest day (true, at some point I got a little carried away), I would have had *carte blanche* to blunder at least three rooks in this game.

■ ■ ■

The next day Anish employed the Petroff against the ultra-solid Rauf Mamedov. The game seemed to be heading for a draw when Rauf started drifting. Suddenly, on move 34, a huge chance arose.

Rauf Mamedov
Anish Giri
Shamkir 2018 (7)



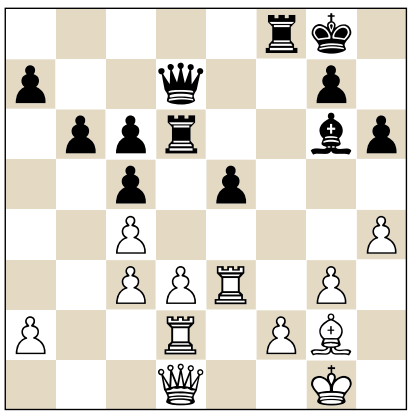
position after 34.♘f1

From this position a draw was agreed after **34...♔f8 35.bxc5 dxc5 36.♕b3 ♘d7 37.♕a4 ♘b8 38.♕b3 ♘d7 39.♕a4**

However, instead of the game continuation, the straightforward 34...♕e1! would have been huge for Black. At first sight it may look like his queenside is in danger, but there is little White can do after 35.bxc5 bxc5. Black will continue ...♔f6-e7 and bring his knight over to e5, while White is completely pinned down and can only wait and see what will happen.

Magnus Carlsen did score his second win and in the process leapfrogged the early leader Veselin Topalov.

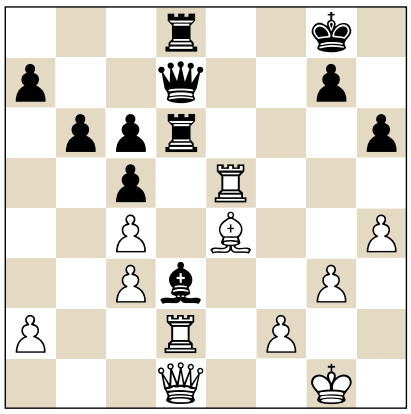
Magnus Carlsen
Veselin Topalov
Shamkir 2018 (7)



position after 25.h4

25...♖d8 The position is roughly equal, but White is definitely on the good side of it. Here 25...♖e8 was fine, when it's not easy for White to increase the pressure, since d3 is weak as well. Topalov takes a more straightforward approach.

26.♖xe5 ♗xd3 27.♗e4!

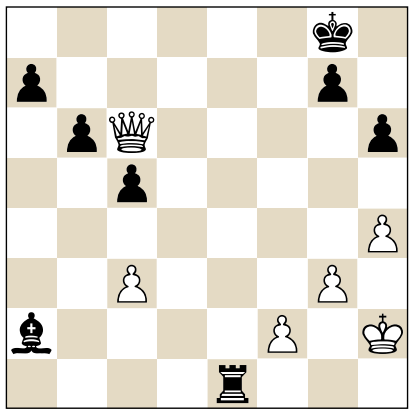


A very unpleasant surprise. Suddenly 27...♗xe4 28.♖xd6 ♕xd6 29.♖e8+! will lose material.

27...♗xc4

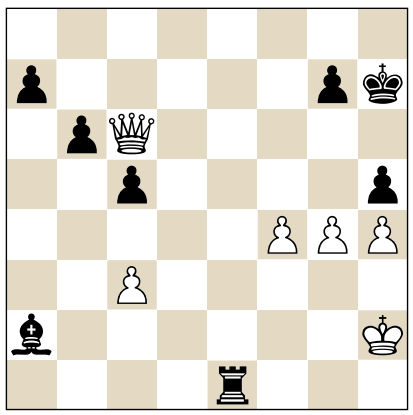
Maybe 27...♔f8!? was possible. White can now win a pawn with the elegant 28.♕f3+ ♔g8 29.♗xc6! ♕xc6 30.♕xc6 ♖xc6 31.♖d5, but after 31...♖xd5 32.cxd5 ♖d6 33.♖xd3 b5! Black will hold the rook endgame without too many problems.

28.♖xd6 ♕xd6 29.♖e8+ ♖xe8 30.♕xd6 ♖xe4 31.♕xc6 ♖e1+ 32.♔h2 ♗xa2



33.g4! Mere mortals would start by picking up the a7-pawn before looking further. The game continuation is much stronger, developing an initiative against the Black king.

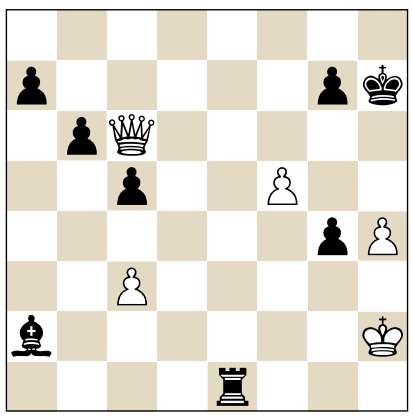
33...♔h7 34.f4 h5



35.f5!

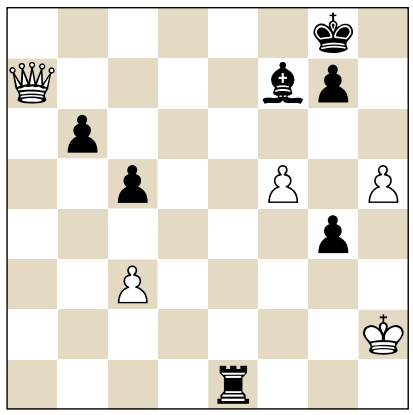
35.gxh5 ♖e6 was Topalov's point, when Black shuffles the rook between f6 and h6 for the remainder of the game and asks White how he would like to break through.

35...hxg4



36.h5 An inaccuracy that endangers the win. Instead, 36.♕g6+ ♔h8, and only now 37.h5, would have prevented the bishop from reaching f7. I am pretty certain White had seen this but was perhaps taken aback by 37...g3+, but here 38.♕xg3 ♖e2+ 39.♔h3 ♗f7 40.h6! gxh6 41.f6 does the job as well. For instance 41...♗e6+ 42.♔h4 ♖e4+ 43.♔h5 ♖g4 44.♕d6, and Black collapses.

36...♗f7 37.♕b7 ♔g8 38.♕xa7



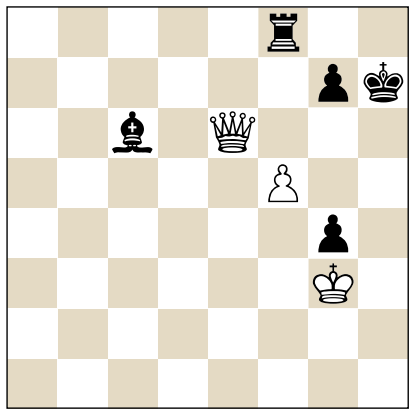
38...♗xh5?

38...♖f1!, eliminating the f5-pawn, is a straightforward draw. I simply don't see any winning try for White.

39.♕xb6 c4 40.♕d8+ ♗e8 41.♔g3 ♔h7

And even here I am not entirely sure White would be able to make progress after 41...♔f8. After the game continuation Magnus converts flawlessly.

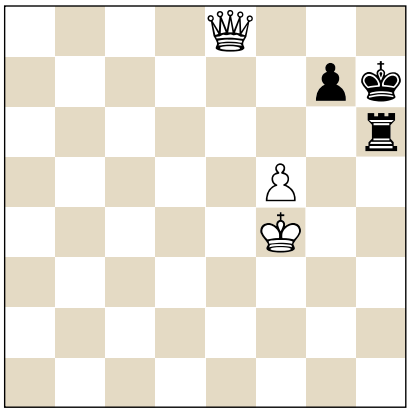
42.♕c7 ♔g8 43.♕xc4+ ♗f7 44.♕d4 ♖e8 45.c4 ♖f8 46.c5 ♗e8 47.♕d5+ ♔h7 48.♕e6 ♗b5 49.c6 ♗xc6



50.♕g6+!

The last accurate move, since 50.♕xc6 ♖xf5 51.♕e4 g6 is a theoretical draw. By kicking the king to the 8th rank, White makes sure he can meet ...♖xf5 with ♕c8+.

50...♔g8 51.♕xc6 ♖f6 52.♕e8+ ♔h7 53.♔xg4 ♖h6 54.♔f4



Fortress?

54...♖f6 55.♔e5 ♖h6 56.♕e6!

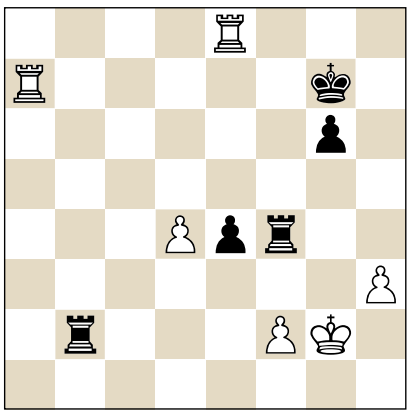
No. Black resigned.

Twitter BFF

This was a key moment, since it proved to be the beginning of the end for Topalov's hopes. After his lightning start, the remaining rounds brought him little joy, because he lost his last three games. David Navara found himself in a similar downward spiral, losing his games in Rounds 5 to 8.

The bloodiest day was Round 8, when four out of the five games ended decisively and the tournament was effectively decided. It was also in this round that bottom seed Rauf Mamedov suffered his first and only loss.

Ding Liren
Rauf Mamedov
Shamkir 2018 (8)

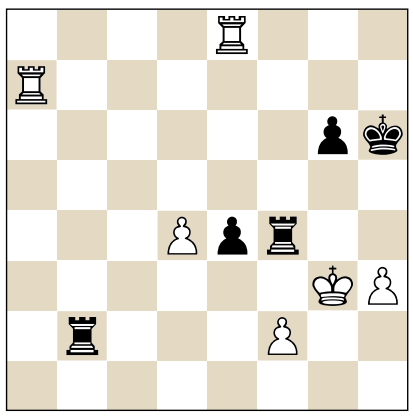


position after 37.♖a7+

Probably assuming that the draw was imminent, Mamedov played his next move without much thought.

37...♔h6 After the other king move, 37...♔f6, the line 38.♖f8+ ♔g5 39.♖xf4 ♔xf4 40.♖f7+ ♔g5 leads to a position in which White's advantage is only of a symbolic nature. With ...♖d2 and ...e3 coming, the draw is clear.

38.♔g3!



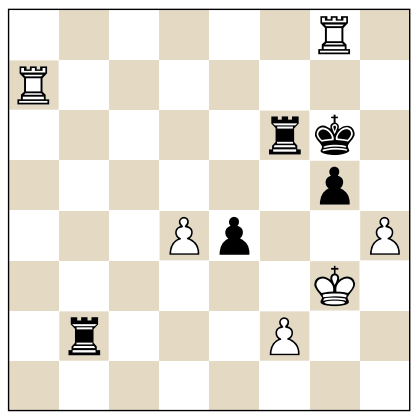
The huge difference. Suddenly Black is dead lost, since his king will be drawn into a mating net.

38...♖f6

After 38...♖f3+ 39.♔g4 threatens mate on h8 and 39...g5 40.♖e6+ doesn't help much, while 38...♖bxf2 39.♖h8+ ♔g5 40.h4+ ♔f5 41.♖f8+ would cost a rook.

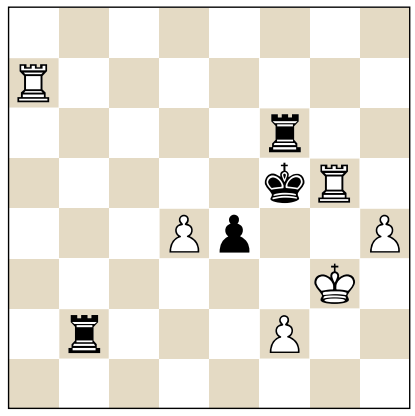
39.h4! Closing the net. Mate in one is threatened.

39...g5 40.♖h8+ ♔g6 41.♖g8+



41...♔f5 There is no escape, since 41...♔h5 42.♖h7+ is mate on the next move.

42.♖xg5+



And Rauf resigned. He loses a rook after 42...♔e6 43.♖e5+ ♔d6 44.♖a6+.

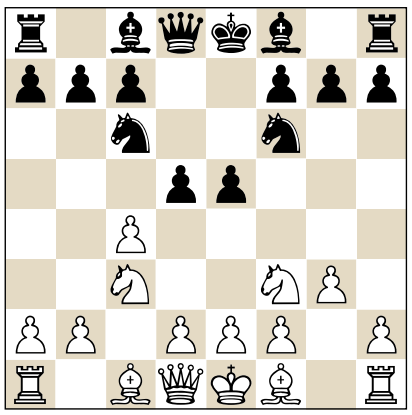
With a win against Rauf Mamedov (who drew all his other games), Ding Liren kept a theoretical chance to fight for tournament victory in the last round.

Doubtlessly the most important result in Round 8 was Magnus Carlsen's win against his Twitter BFF Anish Giri. Here are Anish's notes to that game that ended his chances to fight for tournament victory.

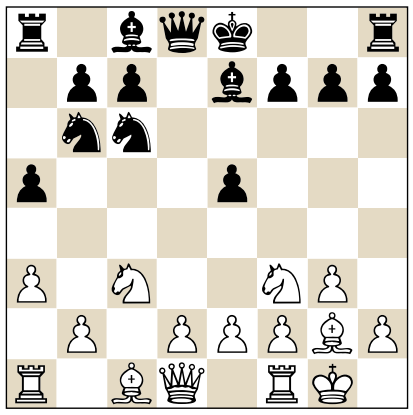
NOTES BY
Anish Giri

Anish Giri
Magnus Carlsen
Shamkir 2018 (8)
English Opening, Reversed Dragon

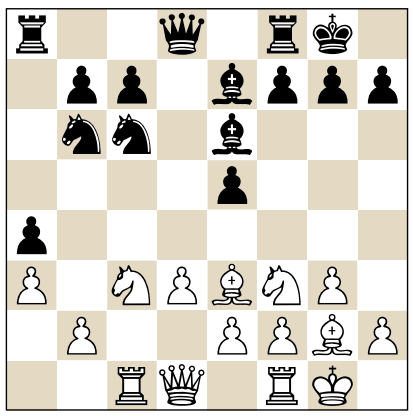
1.c4
This move has yielded me many important wins, but it is always tempting to blame the opening choice for the final outcome. Generally, I play 1.c4 when confident, 1.e4 when desperate and 1.d4 when lazy.
1...e5 2.♘c3 ♘f6 3.♘f3 ♘c6 4.g3 d5



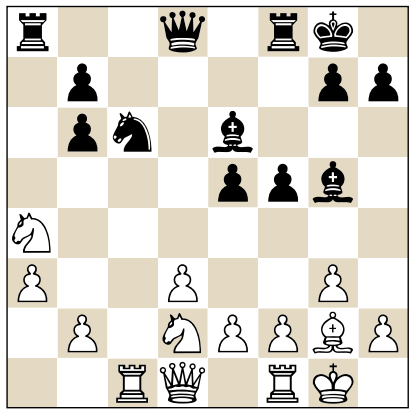
One of the main lines. Magnus had a few games with it in the past as well. I also have good experience with this line as Black, except for a crucial loss to Aronian in the 2016 Tal Memorial, when I was leading the tournament with +3.
5.cxd5 ♘xd5 6.♗g2 ♘b6 7.0-0 ♗e7 8.a3 a5
This move came as a surprise. Previously, Magnus had gone for the very healthy-looking ...♖e8/ ...♗f8 set-up, after allowing b4, whereas I was usually aiming for ...♗e6/ ...♘d4 ideas.



This move was introduced to the big scene by Levon Aronian against Ian Nepomniachtchi in the Geneva Grand Prix last year. I had obviously looked at this line after that game, but as fate had it, I had entirely forgotten about it the past months and found my recollections of it rather confusing. In hindsight, it would have been much better if I had had no recollections at all.
9.d3
From moves 9 to 15, I saw many sensible options to jump out of what I thought was the critical test of this line, but I ended up a prisoner of my memory.
9...0-0 10.♗e3 ♗e6 11.♖c1 a4



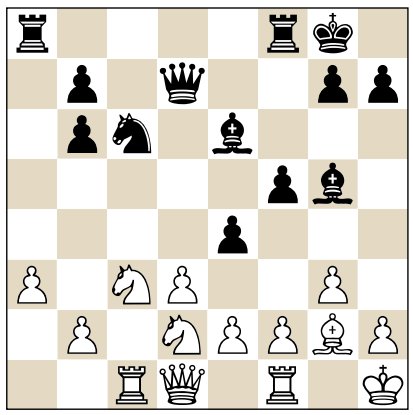
This pawn sac is the point behind the line. White could have prevented it with the less ambitious 11.♘a4.
12.♘d2
I thought this was my improvement over the game of Nepo, but two moves later I realized that we still hadn't deviated from that game.
12...f5 13.♗xb6 cxb6 14.♘xa4 ♗g5



15.♘c3
I spent too much time on this move, trying to make 15.e3 work, but after 15...f4! I wasn't able to see how to avoid getting into trouble. After recalculating that a few times, I had no choice but to go for a position I did not really like.

'In hindsight, it would have been much better if I had had no recollections at all.'

15...e4 16.♔h1!?
I remembered that Ian's game continued 16.♖b1 ♘e5 and thought that it made sense to keep the option of ♖c2. In fact, ...♘e5 was a mistake even after ♖b1, and my move ♔h1 is very sensible, just not for the reasons I thought.
After 16.♖b1, 16...♕d7!? was clearly the improvement of team Carlsen, given that in the game my opponent played this move pretty quickly. White is rather cramped, and although he is by no means worse yet, being unprepared I would definitely not have enjoyed this very much.
16...♘e5 17.♘b3 ♘g4 was played by Ian and here he could have improved with 18.h3 (18.♕c2 ♗e3! happened in the game), when Black would sacrifice his knight one way or another, but only analysis will tell if it works.
16...♕d7



17.♖b1?

The wrong moment to speed up. Now that Black has mobilized fully, I will be too late to generate any play and will face a very unpleasant task.

17.g4! was the remarkable point behind my move ♔h1. Now White suddenly gets very nice play after the logical continuation 17...exd3 18.f4 ♗f6, and now both 19.g5 and 19.gxf5 lead to an unclear but roughly balanced position.

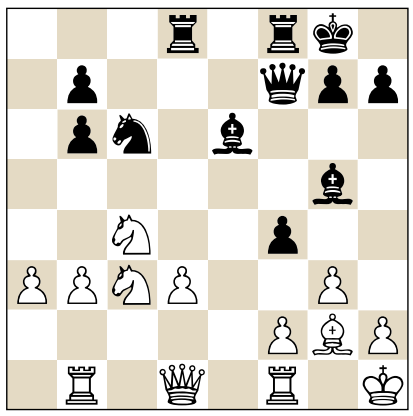
17...♖ad8 18.♘c4

18.f4 was tempting, but I didn't see how to follow it up after 18...♗f6.

18...♕f7 19.b3

A sad move, but the planned ♕a4 did not look good either. The queen would be too far from the kingside after 19.♕a4 exd3 20.exd3 f4.

19...exd3 20.exd3 f4



Now it's clear that with all the dark squares in his control, Black has a serious advantage.

21.♘e4

21.♖e1 f3 22.♗f1 ♘d4 looked so bad, so bad.

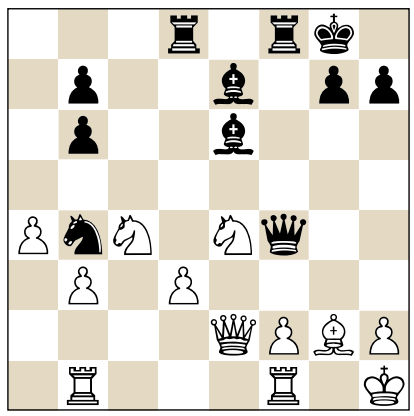
21...♗e7

21...♗h6!? also bothered me a lot.

22.gxf4 ♕xf4 23.a4 ♘b4

I thought this was not too accurate, since after 24.♕e2 Black cannot comfortably take my d3-pawn, and has his bishops somewhat hanging on the e-file. But I had missed Black's next move.

24.♕e2



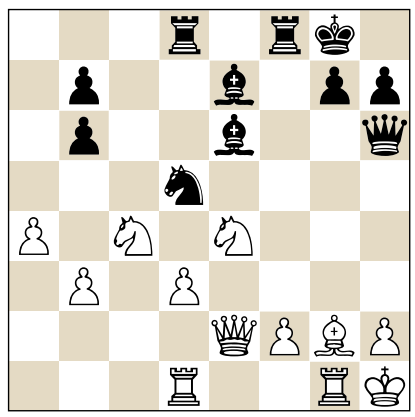
24...♕h6!

Very elegant and strong.

25.♖bd1

White's task is beyond difficult. 25.♕e3 was suggested by Magnus, and while I thought the endgame after the queen swap was extremely bad, he judged correctly that it was tenable. Instead, however, after 25...♖f4! my position is as bad as ever. Probably best was 25.d4!? ♘d5 26.♖be1 ♘f4 27.♕e3, intending ♗f3 and ♘e5, with an ugly but defensible position.

25...♘d5 26.♖g1



26...♔h8

From here on in, probably looking at my evaporating time, Magnus started playing it by hand. 26...♖f4! would have been stronger.

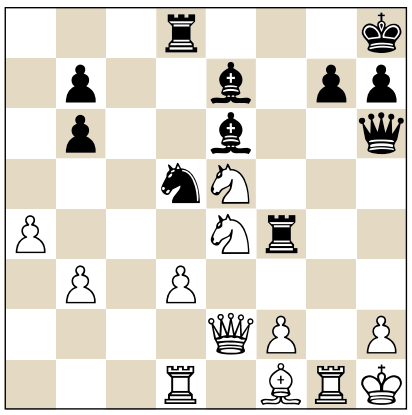
27.♗f1

My original intention was 27.♗f3, but after 27...♘f4 28.♕e3 ♘h3 I realized that the intended ♗g4-ideas weren't exactly working.

27.d4 was a slightly better move order to get the set-up I wanted to get: 27...♖f4 28.f3 ♖h4 29.♗f1.

A touching moment. Chief arbiter Faik Gasanov watches on as Vugar Gashimov's father Gasim makes Anish Giri's first move in his game against Magnus Carlsen.

27...♖f4 28.♘e5



28...♖df8?!

Another move by hand. 28...♖h4! 29.f3 ♘e3! 30.♖d2 ♘f5 would prevent White from going d4 and gain control of this key dark square. Black is winning here.

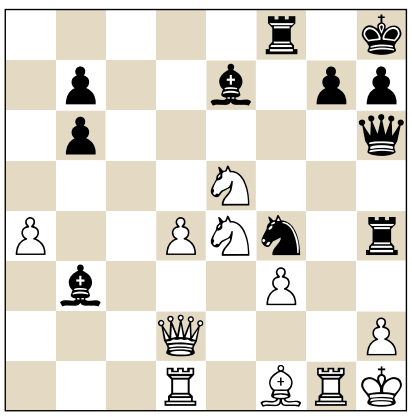
29.f3 ♖h4 30.d4

Now I had suddenly kind of consolidated my still rather sad position. I expected Magnus to continue his slow strategy, hoping for me to collapse voluntarily, but here he suddenly decided to cash in.

30...♘f4

The alternative was 30...♗g8!?.

31.♕d2 ♗xb3



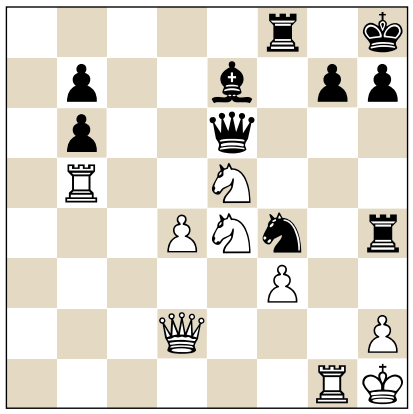
32.♖b1

32.♖c1! was strong, intending 33.♖c7, but I was seduced by the idea of getting rid of Black's bishop pair. Here, in fact, White has play of his own and the position is already objectively equal.

32...♗xa4 33.♗b5 ♗xb5 34.♖xb5

I thought this position was completely defensible, and it probably was, but it was too early to relax.

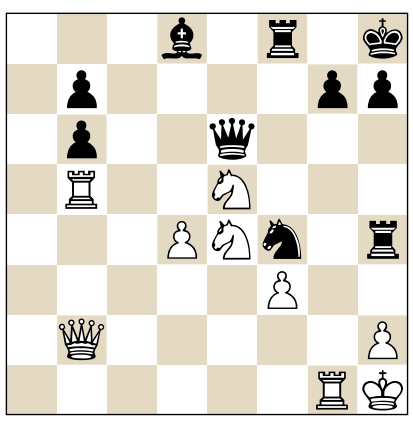
34...♕e6!



35.♕b2?!

I didn't see a clear path to equality or how to further improve the coordination of my pieces, so I finally decided that something would come up if I attacked the b6-pawn and eyed the g7-pawn. But I should have played 35.♖b2!.

35...♗d8 35...♖a8!? was actually also a nice move, since 36.♖xb6? is met by 36...♖a2!.

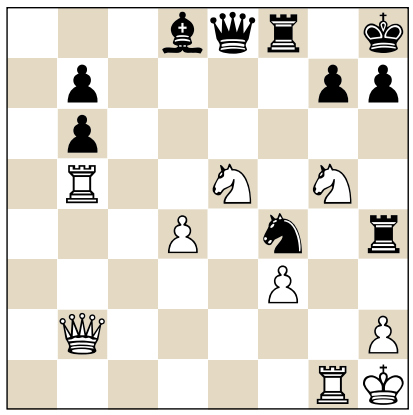


36.♘g5?

While calculating the strong possibility 36.d5! ♘xd5 37.♘g5, I suddenly started wondering why I should give the pawn first, but this logic was very flawed.

So I should have played 36.d5! ♘xd5 (36...♕e8 37.♖e1, and somehow White has everything protected and the d-pawn will keep moving forward to annoy Black) 37.♘g5 ♗xg5 38.♖xg5, and here all the x-rays actually really make sense. White is going to get away unscathed: 38...♖d8 39.♕d2 ♖a4 40.♖xd5. This forces what I assume is a drawn rook ending: 40...♖xd5 41.♕xd5 ♕xd5 42.♘g6+ hxg6 43.♖xd5, and it is hard to imagine that White will not hold this endgame.

36...♕e8!



I saw the strength of this move only after I had played 36.♘g5. Now I am busted again, and it is even too late to return with ♘e4, since Black will take on h2.

37.♖b3

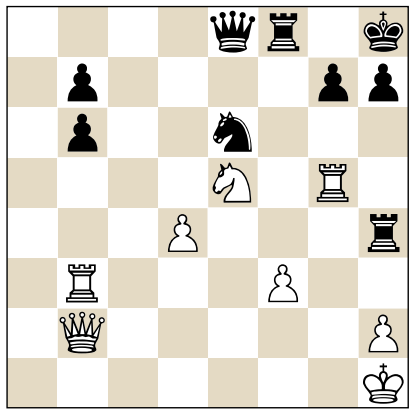
As said, 37.♘e4 fails to 37...♖xh2+!. And 37.d5 doesn't work for many reasons. White's queen is completely overloaded: 37...♖h5 38.♘e6 ♗f6.

37...♗xg5?

This solution looked very simple and strong, but in fact it was not.

Just winning for Black was 37...♖f5 38.♘e4 ♖xh2+ 39.♕xh2 ♖h5 40.♖b2 ♖xh2+ 41.♖xh2 ♔g8, since it leaves White unable to create a sensible threat and Black can do what he wants. Makes sense to push the b-pawn.

38.♖xg5 ♘e6



39.♖g4?

It was hard not to make this move, since d4 was hanging with tempo, but in fact it was necessary to consider all options at this point, as White is on the verge of defeat.

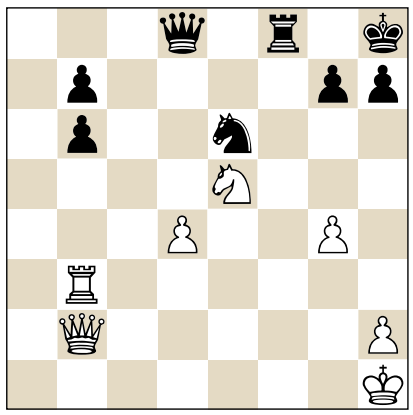
After 39.♖g1! ♘xd4 40.♖e3 White pulls his pieces together and, surpris-

ingly, has reasonable chances to conduct a successful defence.

39...♖xg4 40.fxg4

40.♘xg4 was maybe slightly less lost, although after 40...♕a4! I don't think the chances of saving this position are realistic.

40...♕d8



White's only hope here was that the endgame after 41.♖f3 is not lost by force, but after having spent a lot of time on it, I decided it was. Nonetheless, I should have tried it, if only to prevent disappointing my fans, who were following the game with a computer.

41.♖h3

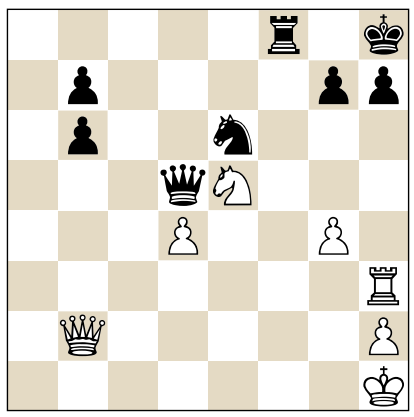
After 41.♖f3 ♖xf3 42.♘xf3 ♕d5 43.♕c3, I was thinking 43...♕c6 is completely winning. That may very well be the case, but the computer points out that keeping the queens wins as well: 43...h6 (after 43...♕c6 44.♕xc6 bxc6 I really wouldn't expect any chances in such a knight ending, but for what it's worth it could be tried) 44.♔g1 ♕e4, and

ETERI KUBLASHVILI

The team that has been successful all three times they came to Shamkir: Henrik Carlsen, Magnus Carlsen and Peter Heine Nielsen.

Black is likely to win a pawn on the kingside as well.

41...♕d5+



Now it's hopeless.

42.♔g1 ♕e4 43.♕b4 ♖f6 44.♕d2

White resigned.

Curiously, while this game was of poor quality if looked at under a microscope, at no point in the game did my opponent make an ugly move, nor take a decision that could be called less than sensible. This goes to show the high class of the World Champion, and at the same time the complexity of our game.

■ ■ ■

As it turned out, Carlsen essentially secured the tournament victory with his win. In the final round, Sergey Karjakin, after eight draws, suddenly saw himself propelled to third place behind Carlsen and Ding when he defeated Topalov.

But on that final day, all eyes were on Magnus Carlsen and Ding Liren. With Carlsen leading by half a point and playing the Chinese player with the white pieces, it was clear that the tournament would either see an exciting finish or a damp squib. When Magnus opted for the most solid line in the Four Knights, it was clear the latter was in the making. His solid approach secured Carlsen a draw on move 27 and a well-deserved third victory in Shamkir. It is telling that when asked about his play, Magnus himself called it 'mediocre'. But scoring 6/9 in this field, while having five Black games, is simply a top result. We'd all love to play such 'mediocre events' ☺. ■

Shamkir 2018 — **cat. XXI**

					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		TPR
1	Magnus Carlsen	IGM	NOR	2843	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	½	6	2884
2	Ding Liren	IGM	CHN	2778	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	5½	2846
3	Sergey Karjakin	IGM	RUS	2778	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	5	2809
4	Teimour Radjabov	IGM	AZE	2748	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	4½	2770
5	Shakhriyar Mamedyarov	IGM	AZE	2814	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	0	1	4½	2762
6	Radoslaw Wojtaszek	IGM	POL	2744	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	1	½	4½	2770
7	Anish Giri	IGM	NED	2777	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	1	4½	2767
8	Rauf Mamedov	IGM	AZE	2704	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	4	2732
9	Veselin Topalov	IGM	FID	2749	0	½	0	½	1	0	½	½	*	1	4	2727
10	David Navara	IGM	CZE	2745	½	0	½	½	0	½	0	½	0	*	2½	2604

Judit Polgar

Time-trouble

Love it or hate it, we all know that time-trouble is an essential part of our game. **JUDIT POLGAR** strongly recommends avoiding it, but does so by presenting fascinating examples of what can happen if you get really low on time.

The times are changing constantly and so is... the chess time-control! After the Second World War, the world in general and the main time-control used in chess enjoyed a long period of relative stability. For decades, what we now call 'the classical time rate' consisted of two-and-a-half hours per player for 40 moves, followed by an adjournment of the game and new controls of one hour for each additional 16 moves. However, by the mid-1980s, only top events like the Kasparov-Karpov matches continued to use this rhythm, while in practically all tournaments, players would have 'only' two hours for 40 moves, followed by another hour for the next 20 moves and only then the possibility of adjourning.

The speeding up of the game continued in the early '90s, and at some point adjournments were abolished altogether. But the modifications were not all about limiting the players' thinking time, as the time-increment per move, suggested by Fischer and gradually adopted by FIDE and other organizers, was an effective antidote against one of the biggest over-the-board nightmares: acute time-trouble. Chess history tells plenty of stories of dramatic games with one or both flags hanging. Of the terrible stress of being unsure about how many moves you were away from the control – since the rules allowed you to stop writing down the moves when time-trouble started – and even less sure about how many seconds were actually left before the flag would fall, because there were no digital clocks yet. Today it is hard to imagine this stress, which was paralysing and stimulating at the same time...

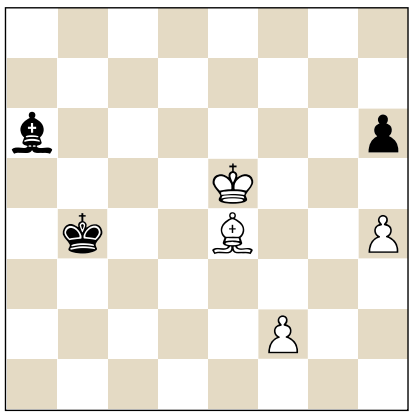
Perhaps thanks to the introduction of increments and the more precise digital clocks, acute time-trouble has become less frequent, but as we all know, time-trouble as such has not disappeared at all. Not nearly.

Generally speaking, top players will maintain their deep understanding in raging time-trouble, but sometimes impulsive moves can ruin a well-played game.

'Today it is hard to imagine this stress, which was paralysing and stimulating at the same time...'

The next two examples, taken from the practice of two rival champions, feature a stunning similarity:

Garry Kasparov
Kiril Georgiev
Saint John Wch blitz 1988



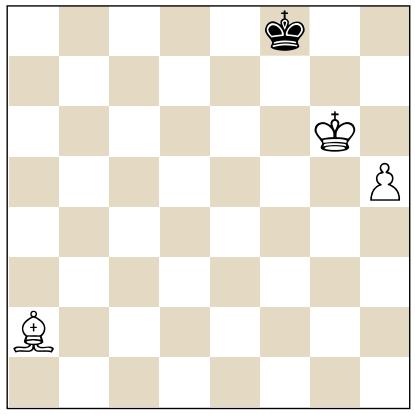
position after 59...♔b4

Kasparov had to win this game to keep his chances of qualifying for the semi-finals in a match in which things had not been going his way. In the databases, the recorded moves end much earlier, but I have reconstructed the decisive phase by following an old video recording.

The World Champion played the next phase accurately, even though his hands sometimes trembled under the

stress. He must already have spotted that the black king would not reach the saving h8-square after losing the bishop.

60.f4 ♔c5 61.f5 ♗c4 62.f6 ♗f7 63.♗f5 ♔c6 64.♗e6 ♗h5 65.f7 ♗xf7 66.♗xf7 ♔d7 67.♔f6 ♔d8 68.h5 ♔d7 69.♔g7 ♔e7 70.♗a2 ♔e8 71.♔xh6 ♔f8 72.♔g6



Objectively speaking, the game is over, but Georgiev was curious to check if the seconds that Kasparov had left and his concentration were enough to deliver mate. With basically no time to think (actually there was not that much to think about), he came up with a coherent plan: to run away as far as possible from the enemy king.

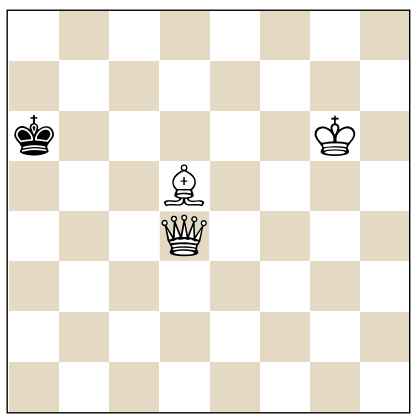
72...♔e7 73.h6 ♔d6 74.h7 ♔c5 75.h8♕ ♔b4 76.♕d4+

Equally coherent play. Kasparov establishes a domination at once, reducing the king's mobility.

76...♔a5 76...♔a3 77.♗d5?? would be an echo of the game continuation.

77.♗d5 Another strong move, completing the centralization.

77...♔a6



78.♕c5?? Stalemate.

It is hard to say what kind of reflex caused this blunder, which leaves the black king stalemated.

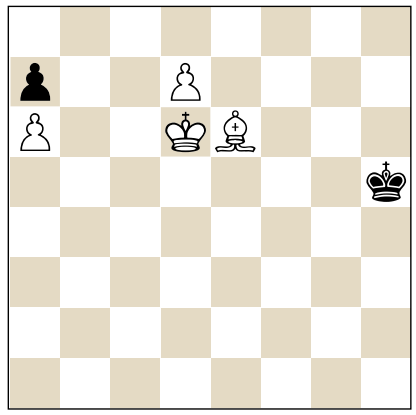
With the queen alone on the board, the standard way of restricting the king was 78.♕b4, which is also the best move here (but only if, after 78...♔a7, White mates on b7 instead of continuing along the restricting pattern with 79.♕b5??, stalemate).

If we replace the queen with the king, the pattern ♔c5, ♗d5 vs.♔a6 is typically favourable in rook and bishop versus rook endings. Just moves before he would mate his opponent, Kasparov's thinking must have been marred by an association with this kind of wrong information.

■ ■ ■

The final blunder in the following game is similar, but even more spectacular.

Anatoly Karpov
Judit Polgar
Budapest rapid match 1998



position after 71.♔xd6

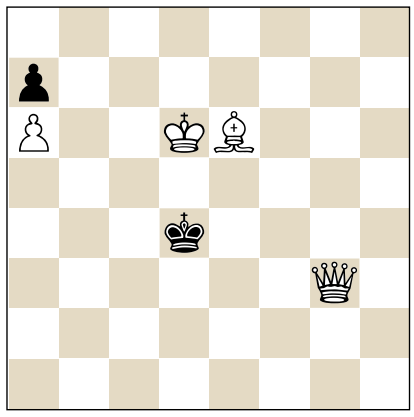
There were no time-increments during my rapid match with Karpov, which is somewhat surprising if we look at the year it was played. It appeared that the rhythm favoured me, since I won the match due to Karpov missing opportunities such as in this game:

71...♔g5 The same instinctive 'strategy' as Georgiev's: the king is hurrying into the 'open air'.

72.d8♕+ ♔f4 73.♕h4+

And the same type of quick regrouping as Kasparov's, culminating in a stalemating domination.

73...♔e3 74.♕g3+ ♔d4



75.♕f3?? Stalemate.

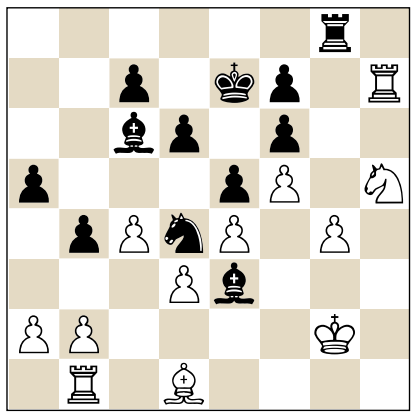
A similar stalemate, but in the centre of the board!

■ ■ ■

You may call the similarity between these episodes coincidence, but it may well have to do with typical thinking patterns when in acute time-trouble.

As a 'tricky player', I frequently benefited from my opponents' acute time-trouble.

Judit Polgar
Sheila Jackson
London 1988



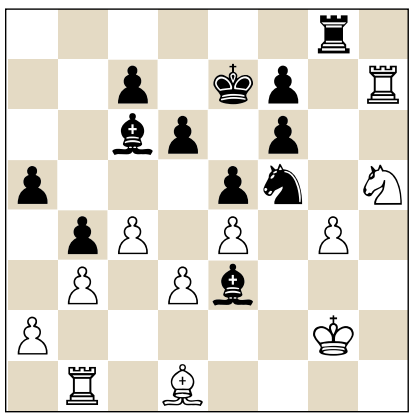
position after 39...♘d4

Sheila had played a very creative game and had reason to hope she might defend her fortress despite the missing exchange. But her flag had been hanging since move 36, and with one move to go she must have been very tense. I felt that she had spotted some simple tactics, but ignored them with the neutral:

40.b3

Preparing a2-a3.

40...♘xf5?
With more time on the clock she would have avoided this blunder, but under the circumstances the impulse to exploit the double pin and snatch a pawn was too strong.

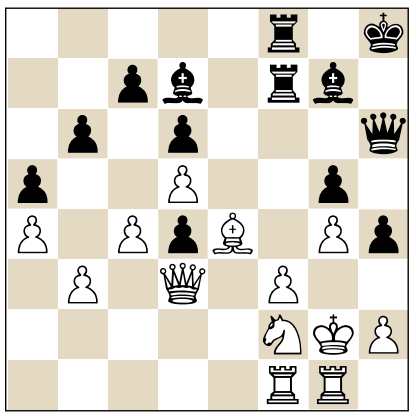


41.♔f3!
Winning a piece.

■ ■ ■

The psychological situation was even more complex in the next example. And the opponent far stronger.

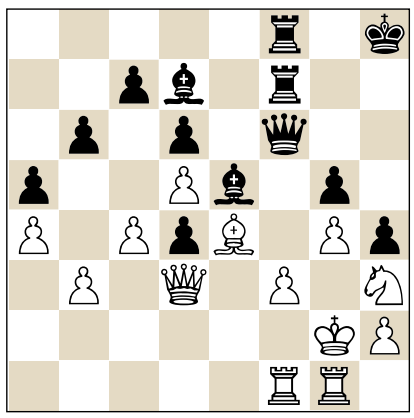
Vladimir Epishin
Judit Polgar
Las Palmas 1994



position after 35.g4

My position is to be preferred, of course, but with a minimum of care White should be able to defend his fortress on the light squares. With my next two moves I increased the pressure, placing all pieces on optimal squares, but without threatening anything concrete. This makes me think of those football attackers who do not do anything special but wait for the ball in an advanced position. And if the opportunity arises, they score.

35...♗e5 36.♘h3 ♕f6
White has many good moves, but also a few wrong ones. With seconds on the clock, it is hard to spot the difference. Epishin's next move looks natural but loses a pawn.



37.♖f2??
Allowing the ball to get to the attacker.
37...♗xg4! 38.♕f1
The thematic line goes 38.fxg4 ♕xf2+ 39.♘xf2 ♖xf2+ 40.♔h3 (or 40.♔h1) 40...♖xh2 mate, something not easy to spot with your flag hanging. We may notice that this combination was possible not only because of White's carelessness, but also due to my previous strengthening moves.
38...♗d7
And I later converted my extra pawn (0-1, 69).

■ ■ ■

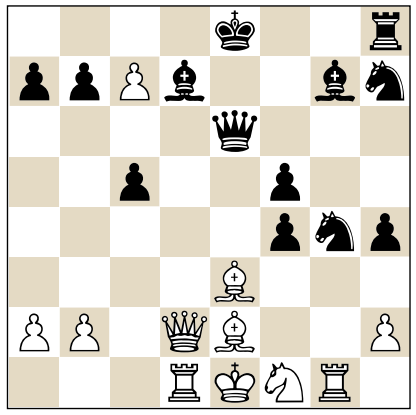
All through chess history, time-trouble has been a kind of 'natural environment' to many great players during their entire careers. From the past, the first names that come to mind are Reshevsky and Kortchnoi. In modern times, the most typical example is Grischuk, who gets into time-trouble in practically every single game.

I was aware of this during my years as an active player, but as a commentator at the 2018 Candidates tournament in Berlin, I could watch the phenomenon even more closely. An extreme case was the game Grischuk-Ding Liren, in which White displayed fantastic home preparation until move 21, and reached a winning position. Ten moves later he found himself in time-trouble (again) and needed to work miracles to... save the game.

I believe Grischuk's time-trouble is caused by his perfectionism, his constant aim to find not just a series of good moves, but the very best move at every step. It also seems that for Grischuk the games become more interesting in time-trouble, which apparently stimulates him to give his very best. He is able of producing incredible moves and taking fantastic decisions when very short on time.

One can only speculate on whether his results would even be better if he managed his time better. On the other hand, he has also, more than once, managed to turn the tables in difficult situations and in severe time-trouble.

A typical example of Grischuk's strength with little time on clock was his game with Black against Aronian played in the Candidates tournament.



position after 24.♖d1

The position is enormously complicated, and Grischuk was in time-trouble already. Being down material and with his king in the centre, he quickly played the 'quiet' move **24...♘g5** and eventually reached a draw (although not without some mistakes on both sides).

Tips:

■ Alexander Kotov wrote that getting into time-trouble is as bad a mistake as blundering a piece.

■ Even though the time-increment makes things easier these days, I strongly recommend avoiding time-trouble at all cost. ■

CHESSBASE ACCOUNT PREMIUM

6 MONTHS

CHESSBASE ACCOUNT:

Access the world of ChessBase from wherever you are 24/7!

PLAYCHESS
The ultimate chess experience

LIVE DATABASE
Professional research: 8 million games online

MY GAMES CLOUD
Your one-stop cloud storage area

FRITZ ONLINE
Your browser-based chess engine

VIDEOS
Private Masterclasses

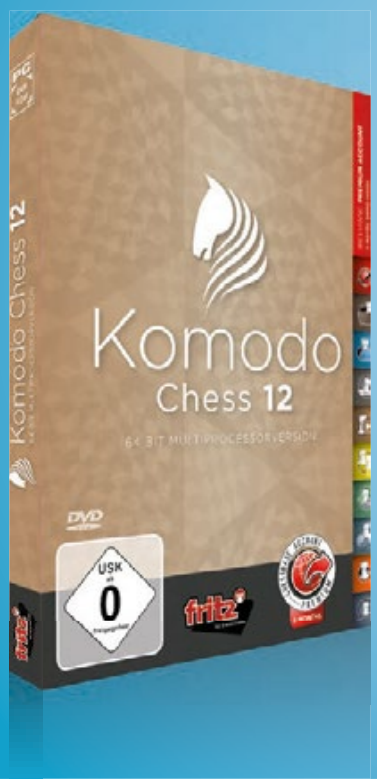
OPENINGS
Welcome to modern opening preparation

TRAINING
Calculate, sacrifice, mate

ENGINE CLOUD
Top engine on the best hardware

LET'S CHECK
Knowledge is mate: 200 million analyses

CB NEWS
The world-renowned chess news portal



KOMODO 12

Komodo gets going! The new version of the multiple world champion program not only plays stronger than ever. What's more, the additionally supplied „Monte Carlo" version of Komodo 12 uses the analysis technology employed by the AI project „AlphaZero" in its recent sensational match triumph.

In computer chess there is no getting past Komodo: Komodo is a triple TCEC Champion. Last year Komodo won the computer rapid chess world championship with an incredible score of 96%! But what does the surprising success of the AI project AlphaZero mean for the future of computer chess? Will the classical engines, with in addition to cunning algorithms any amount of human chess knowledge, still manage to keep their nose in front? Or will the "Monte Carlo" process win through, which works with huge numbers of games and statistical evaluations?

The new Komodo 12 may have no answer to this question but it does have two engines up its sleeve! For with Komodo 12 you get on one hand the new and improved classical Komodo engine. The developing team of computer expert Mark Lefler and chess grandmaster Larry Kaufman has cranked up the playing strength of the top program a bit further. And on the other hand a Komodo 12 "Monte Carlo" version is included. Here the engine behaves quite differently in analysis: within a short time it plays a whole series of games against itself and comes to its evaluations based on the results of these games. As for playing strength, the "Monte-Carlo" version is not yet up there with the classical Komodo 12. But what is interesting is that the playing style of the two versions clearly differs: the "Monte-Carlo" version plays clearly more aggressively and thus also bases its play less on the material balance on the board. Komodo 12 is thus two things: an absolutely top program and an exciting analysis partner, which will often surprise you with its suggestions and introduce you to interesting ideas!

„I am deeply moved by the style of Komodo. In my opinion it's the perfect combination between computer accuracy and human positional understanding. I get the feeling it's taken positional understanding to the next level. After such an impressive performance I am going to test Komodo in my future work, especially in very positional play, and am really looking forward to working with it."

GM Boris Avrukh

It is delivered with the new program interface of Fritz 16 and premium membership (6 months) for the ChessBase Account, including access to playchess.com, ChessBase Video-Portal, LiveDatabase, and much more.

KOMODO CHESS 12:

- Improved Komodo 12 multi-processor engine
- New Komodo 12 "Monte Carlo" engine
- New Fritz 16 program interface
- 6 months ChessBase Premium Account

89.90 €

System requirements:
Minimum: Dual Core, 2 GB RAM, Windows 7 or 8.1, DirectX11, graphics card with 256 MB RAM, DVD-ROM drive, Windows Media Player 9 and internet access.
Recommended: PC Intel i5 (Quadcore), 8 GB RAM, Windows 10, DirectX11, graphics card with 512 MB RAM or more, 100% DirectX10-compatible sound card, Windows Media Player 11, DVD-ROM drive and internet access.

ChessBase GmbH · News: en.chessbase.com · CB Shop: shop.chessbase.com
CHESSBASE DEALER: NEW IN CHESS · P.O. Box 1093 · NL-1810 KB Alkmaar
phone (+31)72 5127137 · fax (+31)72 5158234 · WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM

ChessBase

'One of the most underestimated players in the history of the game'
– *Garry Kasparov*

The Double Genius of Reuben Fine

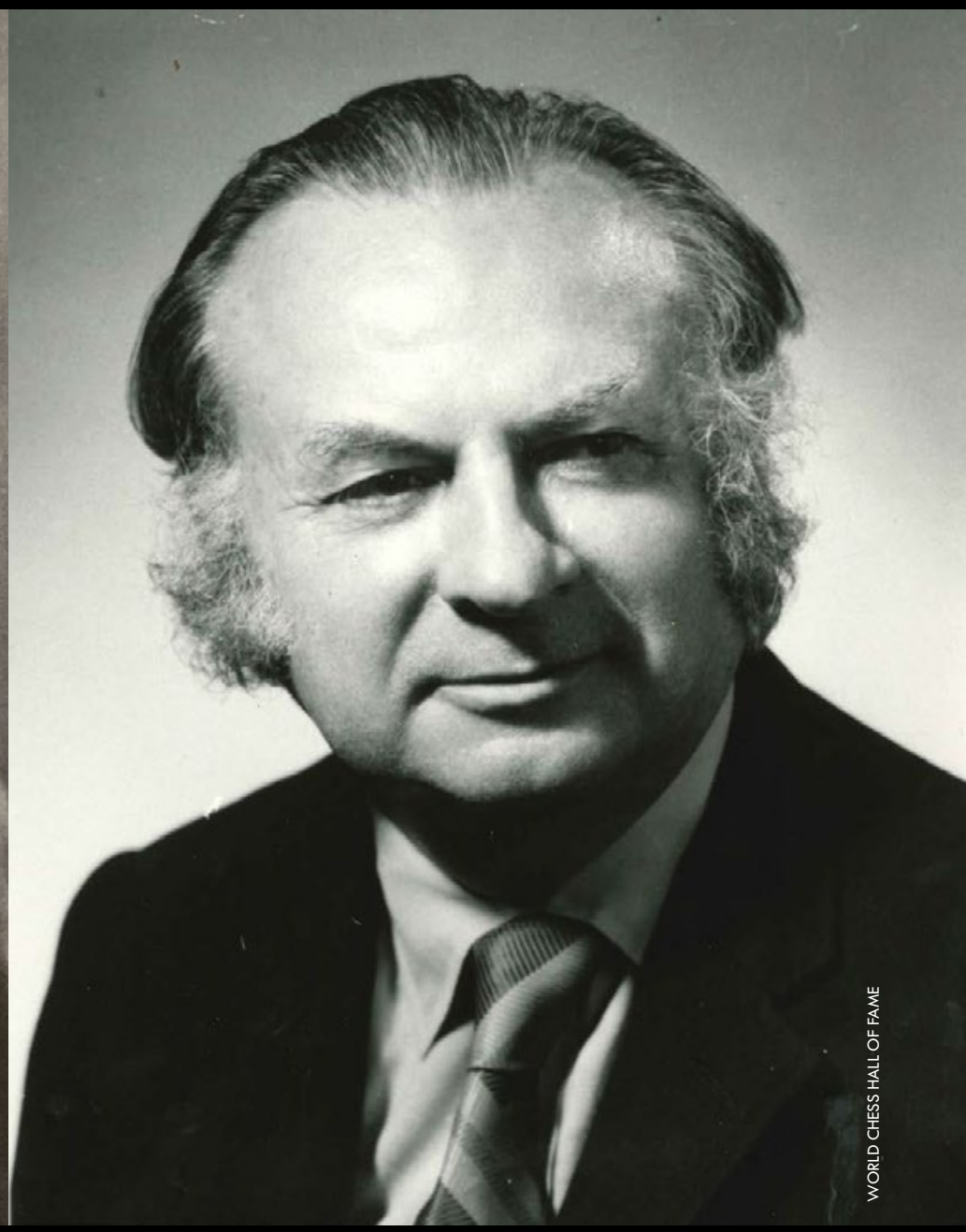
He tied for first with Paul Keres in the great AVRO tournament in 1938 and was one of the strongest chess players in the world. Still, at the age of 26 and at the apex of his chess strength, American Grandmaster Reuben Fine essentially abandoned chess to embark on his second career in psychology. **JOSEPH G. PONTEROTTO** revisits the legacy of Reuben Fine and examines his remarkable achievements in two careers. Additionally, **IRINA KRUSH** annotates two of Fine's finest.

Throughout the history of chess, a number of our greatest players achieved marked success and acclaim in a second career. In the middle of the 18th century, François-André Philidor (1726-1795) was not only the best chess player in the world, but also a celebrated composer of operas. A century later Howard Staunton (1810-1874), recognized as one of the world's strongest players in the 1840s, became a respected Shakespearean scholar. World Champion Emanuel Lasker (1868-1941) was a renowned mathematician and philosopher. While more recently, Russian World Championship Candidate, Mark Taimanov (1926-2016) was an acclaimed concert pianist.

However, perhaps no world-class chess player has achieved such parallel levels of success and distinction in two careers as Reuben Fine (1914-1993), the American grandmaster who became one of the world's most prolific and renowned psychoanalysts.

Reuben Fine's stature in chess and possible claim to a world title match was solidified by his performance at the AVRO double round-robin tournament in the Netherlands in 1938, where he tied for first with Paul Keres (who won on tiebreak points). In this tournament, considered to include the strongest playing field in the history of chess up until that point in time, Fine defeated then World Champion Alexander Alekhine in both games, and finished ahead of future champion Mikhail Botvinnik, as well as former World Champions José Raul Capablanca and Max Euwe.

There is no doubt that Reuben Fine was one of the greatest chess players of his time. Interestingly, Fine achieved more acclaim internationally than in US Championships. Though Fine won all seven US Open Championships he entered between 1932 and 1941, he failed to win the US Championship, coming in second or third in four attempts and placing behind either Samuel Reshevsky or Arnold Denker. Denker, who played against both Reshevsky and Fine for many years, thought Fine to be the superior player to Reshevsky in international play. In studying all of the Fine-Reshevsky US Championship



WORLD CHESS HALL OF FAME

One man, two extraordinary careers. On the left a portrait of Reuben Fine that appeared in the AVRO 1938 tournament book. On the right, the celebrated and groundbreaking psychoanalyst.

games, Denker made this interesting observation:

'I noticed a distinction between the two. Fine, who never had trouble focusing his attention in high-profile international events, occasionally lost tactical control of middlegame positions in domestic tournaments, whereas Reshevsky virtually never suffered from such accidents. Sammy's bad positions came from poorly played openings. I believe that in American events, Fine often found himself wondering why he was playing chess for pennies and let his mind wander.' (*The Bobby Fischer I knew and Other Stories*, p. 122)

It should be noted that in head-to-head competition, Reshevsky had a slight plus score against Fine (+4-3=15). But Fine indeed excelled on the international scene, winning five Olympiad medals including three team golds for the US (1933-1937). Fine's lifetime record against World Champions of the day includes plus scores against Mikhail Botvinnik, Emanuel Lasker, and Alexander Alekhine. And even scores with Max Euwe and José Raul Capablanca.

Prior to the Bobby Fischer era, while some US chess experts thought Reshevsky the country's best hope as a world titlist, a good number thought Fine would be the first North American official World Champion. But it was not to be.

1948: Fine declines to play

After the AVRO tournament, as World War II erupted and international chess tournaments were interrupted, Fine focused on writing and editing chess books, such as his classics *Modern Chess Openings* and *Basic Chess Endings*. He also worked for the US Navy as a translator (Denker reports Fine was fluent in Dutch, French, German, Italian, and Yiddish) and as an intelligence analyst working on predicting where German U-Boats were most likely to surface.

Coming from humble beginnings in the Bronx, New York, Fine, who had lived through the Depression Era, sought after a more financially stable career than chess could provide in those times and so pursued doctoral study in psychology at the University of Southern California (USC). His doctoral dissertation was on the 'The Personality of the Asthmatic Child.'

WORLD CHESS HALL OF FAME

Reuben Fine kibitzes as Gisela Gresser and Arnold Denker are playing a fun game at the 1944 US Chess Championship. Behind Fine, Herman Steiner has spotted the camera.

It was during the post-war period, soon after the death of World Champion Alekhine in 1946, that FIDE organized its first World Championship tournament to determine Alekhine's successor in The Hague and Moscow in 1948. The AVRO 1938 players, save for Alekhine and Capablanca who had died, were invited to participate. However, Salo Flohr, who had fared poorly at AVRO, was replaced by Vasily Smyslov at the request of the Soviet Union. Botvinnik won handily and was thus declared the sixth World Champion.

Though there may remain some mystery regarding why Fine turned down an opportunity of a lifetime by shunning the 1948 World Title tournament, there are three reasons that cannot be ignored. First, he was now focusing full-time on his doctoral study and eager to complete his Ph.D. dissertation (which was successfully defended in 1948). Second, Fine was at odds with the USA Chess Federation and along with other American Masters had tried to set up a rival organization that would better promote and support the financial needs of players. Fine had declined to play in the 1946 US Championship and as a result felt he did not have support from the Federation in his possible quest for a world title. Third, he believed the Soviet Union had unfair and undue influence on FIDE, and that the decks were stacked against non-Soviet players.

In Fine's own words: 'Inasmuch as Keres and I tied for first place in the AVRO tournament of 1938, which was officially designated as the tournament for the selection of the challenger, when Alekhine died in 1946, logically a match should have been arranged between Fine and Keres to decide the title. This was never done for a variety of reasons, mainly political. The tournament arranged in 1947 was called off by the Russians as part of a kind of blackmail scheme to force players to compete in Russia. My own refusal to play in 1948 was motivated in part by the uncertainty about whether the Russians would come to the playing hall at all, and if so, under what conditions ... In the light of the historical record, it seems only fair that Keres and Fine should be listed as co-champions for the period 1946-1948' (from *Bobby Fischer's Conquest of the World's Chess Championship*, 1973, pp. 4-5).

Freudian Psychoanalyst

After receiving his Ph.D. in Psychology in 1948, Dr. Fine launched full speed into his psychoanalytic training and his career as a psychologist, which centred in New York City. His psychoanalytic colleagues confirmed that Fine was multilingual and that he may have also possessed a photographic memory. His resume as a psychologist spans a much wider time period than his world-class chess, and his achievements in psychology likely exceed his contributions to chess. He authored some 20 books and over 100 academic articles on psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is an organized system of psychology and psychotherapy, initially developed by Sigmund Freud, that focuses on the importance of unconscious drives and early attachment relationships to one's mental health throughout life. Dr. Fine was a fierce advocate for the acceptance and legitimization of psychoanalysis into the broader discipline of psychology.

A detailed review of Dr. Fine's contributions to the growth and legitimacy of psychoanalysis in the United States is beyond the goal of this article, so only a few major contributions are highlighted here.

Dr. Fine founded the Division of Psychoanalysis within the American Psychological Association (APA), thus legitimizing psychoanalysis as a defined specialty area in the broader field. He also founded APA's Division of Psychotherapy, thus bringing more recognition to practitioners of psychotherapy, in contrast to the more academic and research emphasis within the association. Dr. Fine was instrumental in establishing post-graduate psychoanalytic training institutes, particularly the Institute for Psychoanalytic Training and Research, and the New York Center for Psychoanalytic Training.

According to colleagues, Dr. Fine was brilliant in interpreting and expanding Freudian psychoanal-

ysis, and worked to humanize the field by framing the process as a deep relationship between two persons rather than a diagnostic process of a 'healthy' analyst assisting an 'ill' patient. He convincingly argued in various publications for the conception of psychoanalysis as both a philosophical and scientific system that was interdisciplinary in scope, incorporating anthropology, history, economics, and literary works.

Dr. Fine was concerned with experimental psychology's focus on measurable and isolated behaviours and cognitions at the expense of a deeper understanding of the complexity and layers of the human psyche that were best understood through psychoanalytic methods (e.g., free association and dream analysis). He advocated strongly for more intensive training of psychoanalysts, for the inclusion of psychoanalytic thought in all academic psychology departments, and he even envisioned the 'psychoanalytic university', where scholars with varying analytic approaches could come together for discussion and research.

At the present time, Dr. Fine's psychoanalytic publications are required readings in many post-graduate psychoanalytic institutes.

Psychology of the Chess Player

Dr. Fine was the second renowned psychoanalyst to apply the methods of his craft to the chess master. A few decades before Fine used psychoanalysis as a lens to study the game of chess and its best players at the time in 1973 (Fischer and Spassky), Ernest Jones, the British psychoanalyst and contemporary of Sigmund Freud, had provided an analysis of Paul Morphy (The Problem of Paul Morphy: A Contribution to the Psychology of Chess, *International Journal of Psychoanalysis*, January, 1931). Fine and Jones would later discuss some unfortunate similarities in the personalities of Morphy and Fischer (reviewed in *A Psychobiography of Bobby Fischer*', Ponterotto, 2012).

Interestingly, Fine's psychoanalytic perspectives on chess are more controversial than his broader body of psychoanalytic scholarship. In his *Psychology of the Chess Player* and in *Bobby Fischer's Conquest of the World's Chess Championship*, Fine applied very Freudian concepts and interpretations to the symbolism of particular chess pieces and moves and to the personalities of those who play the game. Some of this writing was criticized as being too interpretive and speculative and without logical justification, as for example in IM (and physician) Anthony Saidy's review of Fine's Reykjavik match book in *Chess Life* (June, 1974). However, some of Fine's psychoanalytic-based interpretations of Bobby Fischer are insightful.

'Fine offered some predictions about Fischer's future, which, unfortunately, proved to be quite accurate.'

For example, he discusses the importance of winning to Fischer: 'Fischer, brought up without a father, from adolescence on even without a mother, is a man who has been singularly unsuccessful in everything outside of chess. Hence victory in chess for him must gratify all kinds of revengeful omnipotent fantasies, in which he gets back at all the men who have humiliated him throughout his life. By the same token, defeat brings him back to the situation of the helpless abandoned little boy, where he felt so desperately unhappy. Hence defeat involves almost a total breakdown of his life style, and is thus a drastic threat' (p. 82).

Reuben Fine

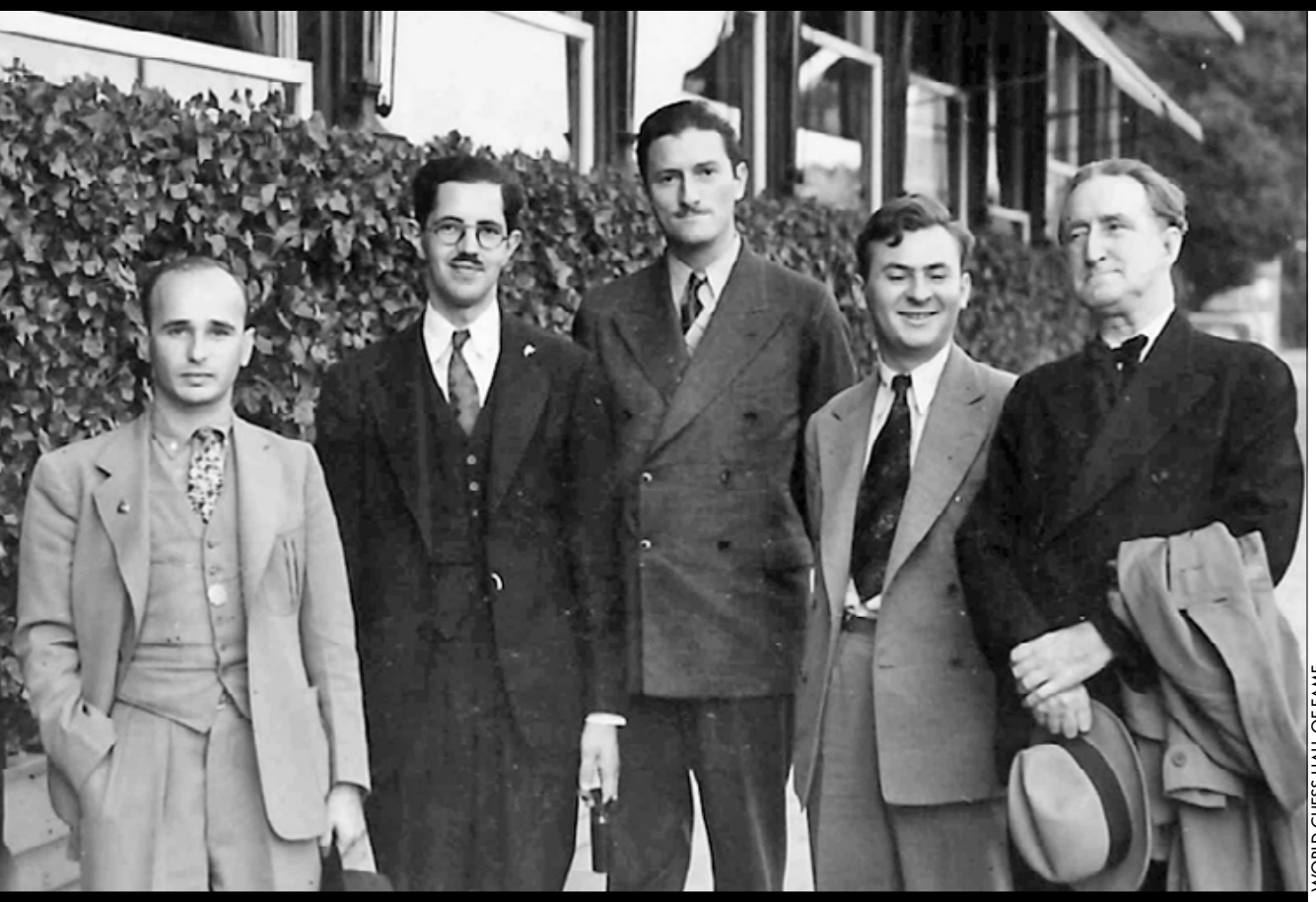
(1914-1993)

Chess Career Highlights

1935/36: Hastings, 1st ahead of Flohr and Tartakower
1936: Zandvoort, 1st ahead of Euwe, Tartakower, and Keres
1936: Nottingham, 3rd = behind Capablanca and Botvinnik
1936: Amsterdam, The Hague, Rotterdam: 1st = with Euwe, ahead of Alekhine
1936/37: Hastings: 2nd behind Alekhine
1937: Moscow: 1st ahead of Kan and Panov
1937: Leningrad: 1st ahead of Levenfish
1937: Margate: 1st = with Keres, ahead of Alekhine
1938: U.S. Championship, New York: 2nd behind Reshevsky
1938: AVRO, Netherlands: 1st = with Keres
1948/49: New York: 1st ahead of Najdorf, Pilnik and Euwe

Dr. Fine offered some predictions in 1973 about Fischer's future, which, unfortunately, proved to be quite accurate. For example: 'Since victory gratifies many of the omnipotent fantasies of childhood for Fischer, he may quite conceivably retire from active chess for a while in order to indulge these fantasies ... All the champions of the past withdrew for some time after their conquest of the title; Fischer's retirement may well be longer because of his emotional conflicts' (p. 83).

Dr. Fine was also prophetic when he commented that Fischer 'will set such extraordinary conditions for any future challenger that it will be impossible to meet them' (p. 476). This indeed was the case as FIDE tried to arrange the 1975 Karpov-Fischer championship match.



WORLD CHESS HALL OF FAME

The victorious US team at the 1937 Stockholm Olympiad: Samuel Reshevsky, Isaac Kashdan, Al Horowitz, Reuben Fine (gold medal on Board 2) and Frank Marshall.

Fine vs. Fischer

In 1956, after Bobby Fischer at the age of 13 won the US Junior Chess Championship, he began meeting informally with Reuben Fine, who was now firmly ensconced in his career as a psychoanalyst. The connection was facilitated by Bobby's mother Regina Fischer, who was concerned that her son's obsession with chess was unhealthy. Knowing Bobby would respect Dr. Fine as a chess legend, she was correct in her perception that Bobby would want to get to know Dr. Fine and play chess with him. Mrs. Fischer hoped that Dr. Fine could be a role model for her son and open his mind to the world outside of chess.

In his book on the 1972 match (pp. 24-25), Fine described his meetings with young Bobby Fischer: 'He came to see me about half a dozen times. Each time we played chess for an hour or two. In order to maintain a relationship with him I had to win, which I did... My family remembers how furious he was after each encounter, muttering that I was "lucky". Hopeful that I might help him to develop in other directions, I started a conversation at one point about what he was doing in school. As soon as school was mentioned, he became furious, screamed "You have tricked me", and promptly walked out. For years afterward, whenever I met him in clubs or tournaments he gave me angry looks, as though I had done him some immeasurable harm by trying to get a little closer to him.'

Though Bobby surmised that Dr. Fine was in 'cahoots' with his mother at this time, there are some interesting parallels in the lives of Fine and Fischer. First, both men in their primes were likely the strongest players in the world (or in Fine's case, certainly one of the world's top three players), both were from Jewish, Eastern European immigrant families, both grew up without a father figure and during difficult economic times, both felt the US Chess Federation supported Samuel Reshevsky more than them, and both strived to improve the status and financial support for US chess players.

'He became furious, screamed "You have tricked me", and promptly walked out.'

Fine gave up on trying to 'professionalize' US Chess and took his energy and advocacy to another field, psychoanalysis, which during his time was not accepted on the same level as the more experimental and academic psychology. Fine worked tirelessly, and to a large degree succeeded, at improving training for psychoanalysts and promoting their integration into the broader psychological community.

Fischer was outspoken in demanding better playing conditions for US chess players and lobbying for more substantial financial remuneration in tournaments. He believed that chess masters should be regarded with the same respect and status as other professionals – physicians, lawyers, professors, and so forth.

Thanks in part to Fine's leadership and advocacy, psychoanalysis is alive and well in the United States and many post-graduate psychoanalytic centres continue to thrive. And thanks in part to Fischer, many top players can actually earn a good living playing and teaching chess. Both Fine and Fischer were mavericks and pioneers – Fine in both chess and psychoanalysis, Fischer in chess.

Despite some interesting parallels in the lives of Fischer and Fine, the two men had markedly different personalities. Fischer became increasingly paranoid, isolated, and psychologically handicapped, whereas Fine went on to have a distinguished career as a psychologist devoting the last 50 years of his life to helping patients of all ages, professions, races, and religions. Dr. Fine also provided psychological services to many chess players during his decades in practice. Bobby Fischer, despite his controversy and psycho-

logical challenges, has received due acknowledgement as a chess legend. We believe Dr. Reuben Fine is owed a more prominent place in the history of chess and psychoanalysis.

Chess after AVRO

Reuben Fine's career is highlighted in Aidan Woodger's chess biography, *Reuben Fine: A Comprehensive Record of an American Chess Career, 1929-1951*. According to Woodger, Fine retired from active professional chess at the end of 1941, when he went to work for the US Government during World War II. He would play in the occasional tournament thereafter, but by the mid-1940s Fine was now fully embarked in his training as a psychologist and psychoanalyst. Throughout his long career as a psychoanalyst, Dr. Fine would sometimes venture into one of New York City's famed chess houses, such as the Manhattan, the Marshall, or the 'Flea House' (the popular name for The Chess and Checker Club of New York) and approach the club's manager, asking 'Do you have a strong player here today that I can play against?', whereupon the club manager would quickly summon the best player present to sit down and challenge Fine. Likely, these visits to chess clubs in the 1970s were a welcome reprieve from Dr. Fine's intense work as a psychoanalyst. Chess likely also kept Dr. Fine's mind sharp and focused, which benefited him in his clinical work and prolific writing.

It is fair to conclude that Reuben Fine was not only one of the greatest chess players in history, but also one of the most influential and prolific American born psychoanalysts in the 20th century.

Joseph G. Ponterotto, Ph.D., is a Professor of Counseling Psychology in the Graduate School of Education at Fordham University in New York City. He is the author of 'A Psychobiography of Bobby Fischer' (2012).

We end on a chess note, as GM and seven-time US Women's Champion Irina Krush accepted our invitation to analyse two of Fine's wins from the 1938 AVRO tournament. His victory over future World Champion Mikhail Botvinnik, and his defeat of Samuel Reshevsky.

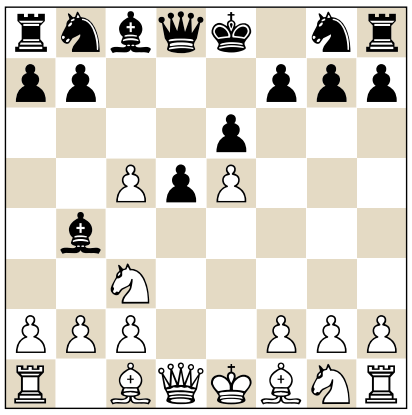
NOTES BY
Irina Krush

Reuben Fine
Mikhail Botvinnik
Hilversum AVRO 1938 (1)
French Defence, Winawer Variation

1.e4 Although Reuben Fine was predominantly a 1.d4 player, in AVRO 1938 he opened with 1.e4 in six out of seven games with White.

1...e6 The French was Botvinnik's main weapon at the time, though 1...e5 and 1...c5 were also part of his repertoire.

2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♗b4 4.e5 c5 5.dxc5 This game was only the second to feature this move.



5...♘e7

The first was Bogoljubow-Alekhine, Bad Nauheim 1937, which resulted in a crushing win for White after 5...♘c6 6.♘f3 f6? (6...♗xc5 was possible, 6...♘ge7 would transpose to Fine-Botvinnik). This typical attack on the e5-pawn does not work out well for Black: 7.♗b5 ♗xc5 8.0-0 ♗d7 9.♖e1 fxe5 10.♘xe5 ♘xe5 11.♖xe5 ♗xb5 12.♘xb5 ♘f6 13.♖xe6+ ♔f7 14.♖xf6+ gxf6 15.♕h5+ ♔g8 16.♗h6, and White was winning (1-0, 24).

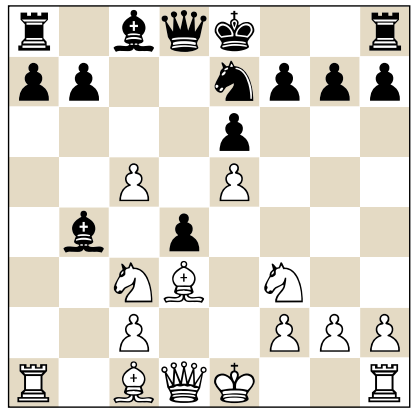
6.♘f3 ♘bc6

Of course, Black has many ways of playing against a move like 5.dxc5, but this is certainly one of them. 6...♘d7 or 6...♗xc3+ 7.bxc3 ♘d7 also come to mind.

7.♗d3 d4

Now begins a forced sequence as White tries to break the pin.

8.a3 ♗a5 9.b4 ♘xb4 10.axb4 ♗xb4



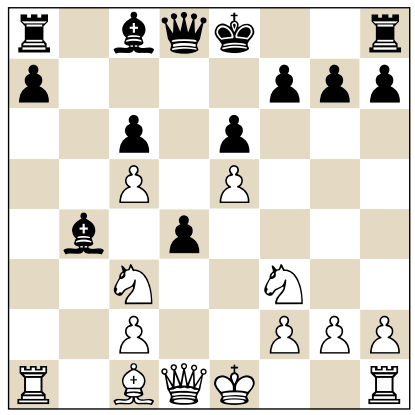
11.♗b5+

White had a good alternative in the pawn sacrifice 11.0-0!? ♗xc3 12.♖b1, requiring careful play by Black.

11...♘c6?!

It's not clear why Botvinnik didn't play the simple developing move 11...♗d7, where he obviously has no problems after 12.♕xd4 ♗xc3+ 13.♕xc3 ♗xb5.

12.♗xc6+ bxc6



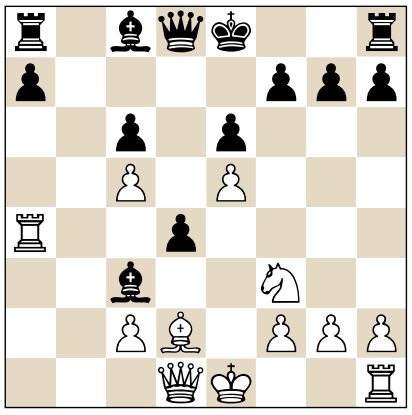
13.♖a4! An easy move to overlook. Most likely Botvinnik was counting on the more natural 13.0-0 ♗xc3 14.♖a4 ♕d5 and though Black would be doing well after winning the c5-pawn, White would still have full

Amongst World Champions at Amsterdam Airport in 1961: Vasily Smyslov, Max Euwe, Reuben Fine, Mikhail Botvinnik and Mikhail Tal.

compensation after 15.♗d2 ♕xc5 16.♗xc3 dxc3 17.♕d3 0-0 18.♖fa1 a5 19.♖c4 ♕e7 20.♕xc3.

13...♗xc3+ 14.♗d2

A critical position for Black, where he needs to figure out how to free the bishop on c8.



14...f6?

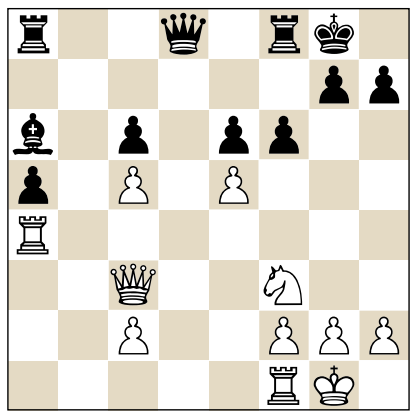
Botvinnik tries to break the circle of blockade on the e5-square, but c5 was the correct target.

The move that had to be played was 14...a5!. The main idea of this move is to develop the bishop via a6. In most of the possible variations, Black will try to get counterplay against the c5-pawn, e.g.: 15.0-0 ♗a6 16.♗xc3 dxc3 (16...♗xf1? 17.♖xd4) 17.♕xd8+ ♖xd8 18.♖e1 ♗b5 19.♖xa5 0-0, with ...♖d5 next.

Also 14...0-0 15.0-0 ♖b8, with ...♖b5 next, was better than the game.

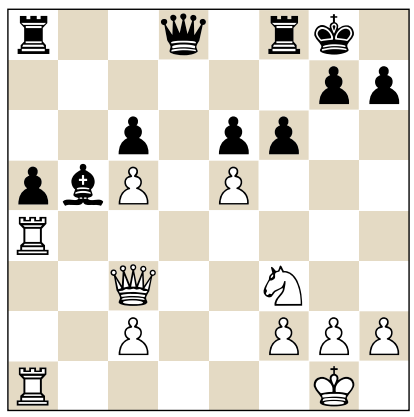
However, there is no 14...♕d5 as in the 14.0-0 line, since White wins immediately with 15.♗xc3 dxc3 16.♖d4!.

15.0-0 15.♗xc3 dxc3 16.♕a1 would have led to a similar position as in the game. **15...0-0 16.♗xc3 dxc3 17.♕e1! a5 18.♕xc3 ♗a6**

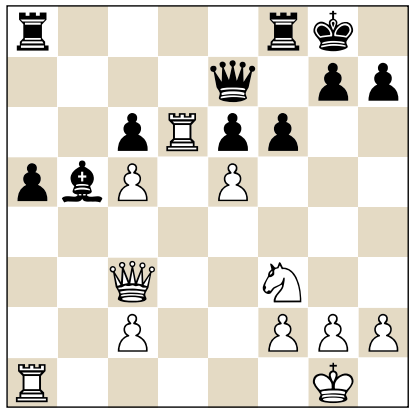


As we can see, Black spent a valuable tempo on the move ...f6, which only seems to have weakened his position.

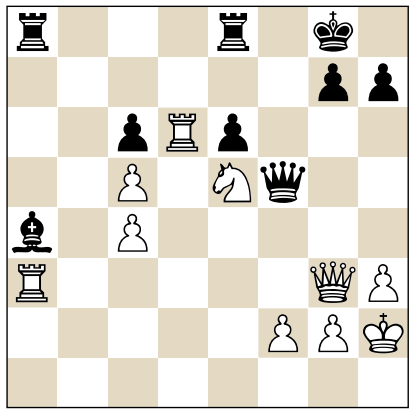
19.♖fa1 ♗b5



20.♖d4! As 20.♖xa5? ♖xa5 21.♖xa5 ♕d1+ is not what White is looking for. **20...♕e7 21.♖d6**



White is dominating despite Black's passed a-pawn, which White wins shortly. **21...a4 22.♕e3 ♖a7 23.♘d2 a3 24.c4 ♗a4 25.exf6 ♕xf6 26.♖xa3 ♖e8 27.h3 ♖aa8 28.♘f3 ♕b2 29.♘e5 ♕b1+ 30.♔h2 ♕f5 31.♕g3**



Black resigned as White is threatening an invasion with ♖f3-f7 and there is no good way to stop it.

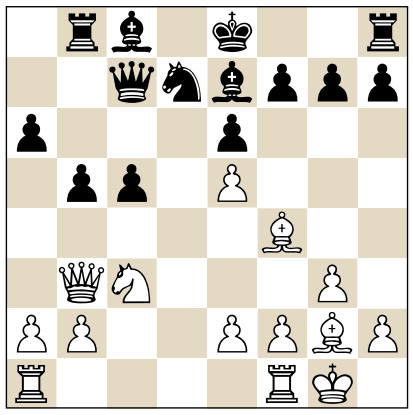
For instance, 31...♖e7 (or 31...♖a7 32.♘xc6 ♖aa8 33.♘e5) 32.♖xa4 ♖xa4 33.♖d8+ and White wins.

NOTES BY
Irina Krush

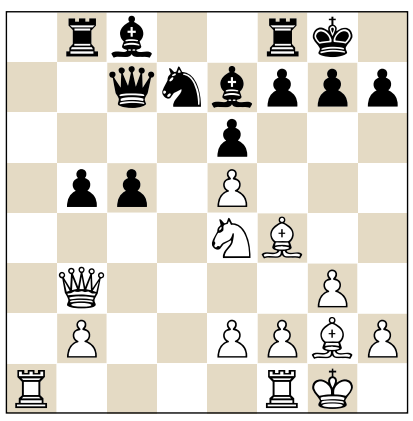
Samuel Reshevsky
Reuben Fine
Hilversum AVRO 1938 (2)
Catalan Opening

Most of the games between Reuben Fine and Samuel Reshevsky took place between 1933 and 1941. This was

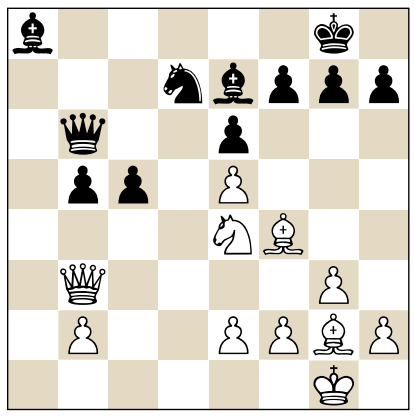
Fine's only victory in the four decisive results between them over the years.
1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.g3 dxc4 5.♕a4+
Today 5.♗g2 is the main move.
5...♘bd7 6.♗g2 a6 7.♘c3 ♗e7 8.♘e5 ♖b8 9.♕xc4 b5 10.♕b3 ♘xe5 11.dxe5 ♘d7 12.♗f4 c5 13.0-0 ♕c7
13...♗b7 14.♗xb7 c4 15.♕c2 ♖xb7 was an alternative.



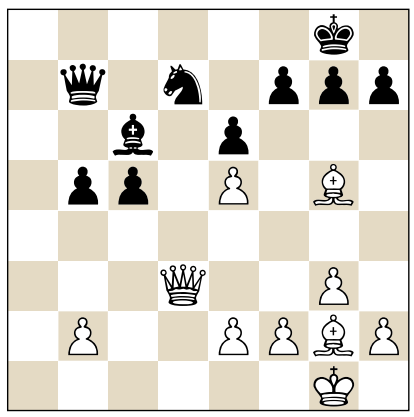
14.a4?! Given that Black has an advantage in pawn structure (three versus two on the queenside) White should have looked for dynamic chances: 14.♘e4! ♗b7 (14...♘xe5 15.♕c3 f6 16.♖ac1 c4 17.b3 ♗b7 18.bxc4 bxc4 19.♗xe5 ♕xe5 20.♕xe5 fxe5 21.♖xc4 should be equal, but Black still has to make the draw) 15.♘d6+ ♗xd6 16.exd6 ♕b6 17.e4 e5 18.♗e3 ♕xd6 19.♖fd1 ♕c7 20.♗h3, with more than enough compensation for the pawn.
14...0-0 15.axb5 axb5 16.♘e4



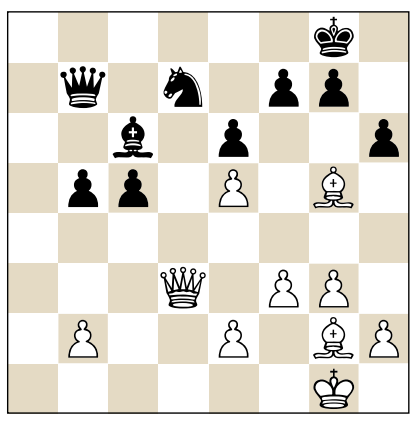
16...♗b7 Fine was correctly not interested in 16...♘xe5 17.♕c3 f6, as White will regain the pawn with 18.♖fc1 c4 19.b3. **17.♖a7** Black would be clearly better after 17.♘d6 ♗xg2 18.♔xg2 g5 19.♗e3 ♘xe5 20.♘e4 h6.
17...♕b6 18.♖fa1 ♖a8 19.♖xa8 ♖xa8 20.♖xa8+ ♗xa8



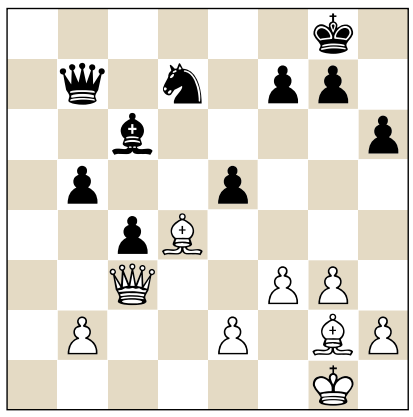
The plan White chose with the move 14.a4 did not work out well. Black feels more comfortable with all the rooks exchanged and White should be concerned about the upcoming endgame. **21.♕d3** 21.♘f6+ favours Black after 21...♗xf6 22.♗xa8 ♘xe5. **21...♗c6 22.♘g5 ♗xg5 23.♗xg5 ♕b7**



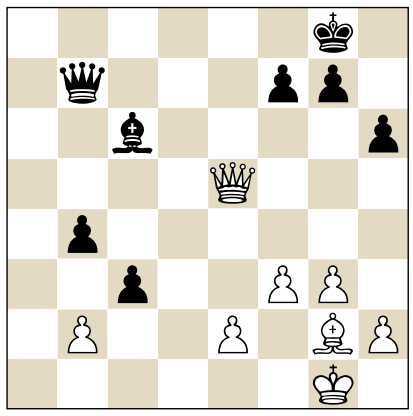
It's an unpleasant position to defend with White, although the computer proposes to hold it with 24.♗xc6 ♕xc6 25.♗e7 h6 26.f4.
24.f3 h6



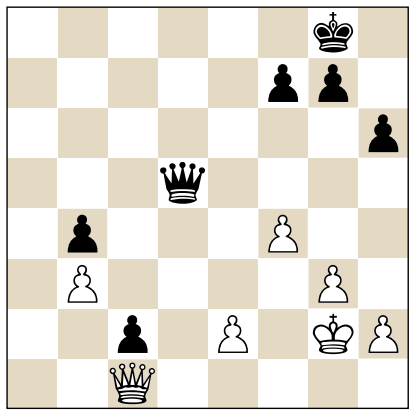
25.♗e7? 25.♗f4 was necessary, after which Black could continue 25...b4.
25...c4! White probably missed this move that wins a pawn. 25...♘xe5 would not bring Black anything: 26.♕d8+ ♔h7 27.♗xc5. **26.♕c3 ♘xe5 27.♗c5 ♘d7 28.♗d4 e5**



29.♗xe5? This loses the game. 29.♗e3 would have kept up the resistance. **29...b4 30.♕d4 ♘xe5 31.♕xe5 c3**



The pawn breakthrough decides.
32.b3 ♕b6+ 33.♔f1 c2 34.♕b2 ♕c5 35.♕c1 ♗d5 36.f4 ♗xg2+ 37.♔xg2 ♕d5+



White resigned. The main factor around which this game revolved was the pawn structure. White's strong space-taking e5-pawn should have been used dynamically. Once Reshevsky missed his chance, Fine ably exploited the favourable situation on the queenside. ■

Caruana continued

Challenger tops World Champion in Grenke Classic

Only four days after he won the Candidates in Berlin, Fabiano Caruana sat down in his new capacity as the next Challenger to the world title to play... Magnus Carlsen! Many people wondered whether the American had enough energy left to play a prominent role in the Grenke Classic. The answer was an unambiguous yes. Having survived a precarious position against the World Champion, Caruana went on to claim first prize. **ERIC VAN REEM** reports.

Sometimes you need a little luck as an organizer. For the Grenke Chess Classic 2018, tournament director Sven Noppes had invited the same players as last year, plus the winner of last year's Open, Nikita Vitiugov, and the winner of the first edition in 2013, Vishy Anand. This meant that two of the participants, Aronian and Caruana, would hardly have time to recover from the strenuous Candidates tournament that finished in the same week as 'Grenke' started. On the other hand, if one of them won in Berlin, it would certainly add to the suspense. After all Magnus Carlsen was the top-seed in the Grenke Classic.

The organizers' dream came true when Fabiano Caruana prevailed in Berlin and almost immediately travelled on to Karlsruhe, where the first three rounds were to be played. But would he have energy left and stand a chance against the well-rested World Champion? Caruana remained calm and unfazed and almost laconically commented: 'There's no pressure on this tournament, obviously, it's just a training tournament and for fun.' Perhaps it was, but he, too, must have given some thought to this encounter with Carlsen in light of their match in November.

0.0105518624%

And it came even sooner than expected! Before the first round of the massive Grenke Open, the stars of the Classic appeared on stage in front of a packed house for the drawing of lots. Caruana drew number one, and Magnus Carlsen, much to his chagrin, drew number 10, meaning

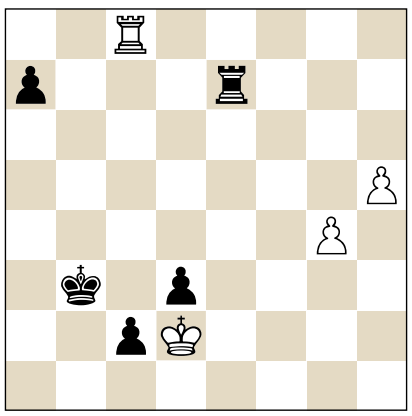
MARIA EMELIANOVA

Wolfgang Grenke applauds Magnus Carlsen's sporting gesture as the World Champion congratulates Fabiano Caruana with a broad smile.

that the warm-up game for the World Chess Championship would already be played in the first round. As Norwegian chess journalist Tarjei Svensen exclaimed on Twitter: 'This is remarkable! This is the FOURTH (!) closed tournament in a row where Carlsen and Caruana face each other in Round 1: St. Louis, London, Wijk aan Zee, and now Karlsruhe. What are the odds?' It did not take long before another Twitter user calculated the odds: '1 in 9477, or 0.0105518624%.'

Despite the fact that he was playing with the black pieces, the World Champion made a statement by playing the opening phase very sharply and emerging from it with a serious edge. The task of defending an unpleasant position with limited time on the clock looked insurmountable for Caruana, but just as they were nearing the time-control, Carlsen committed what he later described as a 'beginner's mistake' when he played too quickly.

Fabiano Caruana
Magnus Carlsen
Karlsruhe 2018 (1)



position after 54.♖c8

The mind-boggling move 54...♖h7! would have won for Black. Carlsen stated afterwards that he had already given up playing for a win at this stage, and went:

54....a5 54...♖h7 stops the pawns and White is helpless against the march of the a-pawn. Checks do not help: 55.♖b8+ ♔a2 56.♖c8 a5 57.♔xd3 ♔b1!, and wins. **55.h6 ♖e2+ 56.♔xd3 ♖h2 57.g5 ♖h3+ 58.♔d2 ♖h2+ 59.♔d3** Draw.

Carlsen: 'I came pretty close but... rook endings are difficult!'

Great beauty

The sole winner in the first round was Nikita Vitiugov. The 31-year-old grandmaster from St. Petersburg is not often in the spotlight, but he is a reliable scorer in various team championships, and in the Russian Super Final last December he only lost the playoff against Peter Svidler. His win against Matthias Blübaum was one of great beauty.

NOTES BY
Nikita Vitiugov

‘As it is said, the less you know the sounder you sleep. However, after switching on my computer I also grasped the secret of their confidential knowledge...’

Matthias Blübaum
Nikita Vitiugov
Karlsruhe 2018 (1)
Slav Defence

The three rounds in Karlsruhe were played on a stage in the same hall as three open tournaments (it was announced that a total of one and a half thousand players took part in them). For a round-robin tournament the atmosphere was unusual – there were very many spectators, and it was rather noisy. Additional tension was imparted by the show element – the players were invited onto the stage one by one, rather like boxers before a bout. It was not easy to maintain concentration before the start of a game – usually the round was delayed by about ten minutes, as fans requested autographs and photos...

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6

A slight surprise. Today the Slav Defence does not take anyone aback, but its choice in a specific game may be unexpected.

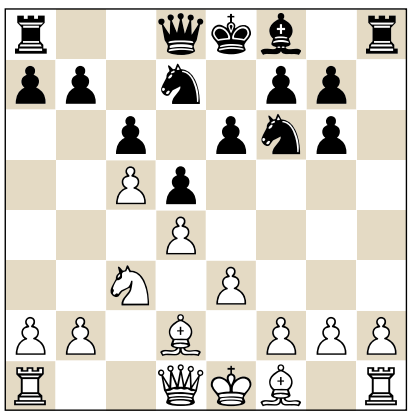
3.♘f3 ♘f6 4.e3 Predictably avoiding the critical variations.

4...♗f5 Other moves, 4...♗g4 for example, are no worse.

5.♘c3 e6 6.♘h4 ♗g6

6...♗e4 7.f3 ♗g6 is sharper.

7.♗d2 ♘bd7 8.♘xg6 hxg6 9.c5



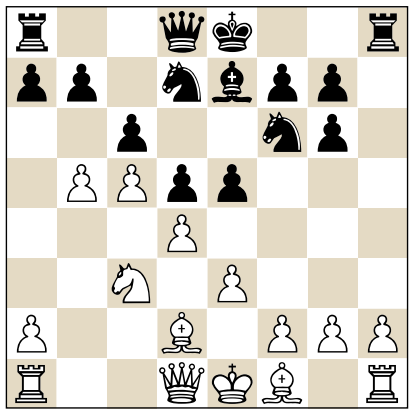
A new move for me. If I correctly understood Matthias after the game, it has long been known to the experts in this line. As it is said, the less you know the sounder you sleep. However, after switching on my computer I also grasped the secret of their confidential knowledge...

9...e5 A logical move. White is prepared for the undermining moves ...b6 ...a5, and if he is given time he will also deprive Black of this counterplay by f4.

10.b4 ♗e7

The only grandmaster game on this theme went 10...a6 11.a4 ♗e7 12.g3 exd4 13.exd4 ♘f8 14.♗g2 ♘e6 15.♗e3 ♘g8 16.0-0 ♗f6 17.♘e2 ♘e7, with complicated play, Salgado-Alsina, Barcelona 2011.

11.b5

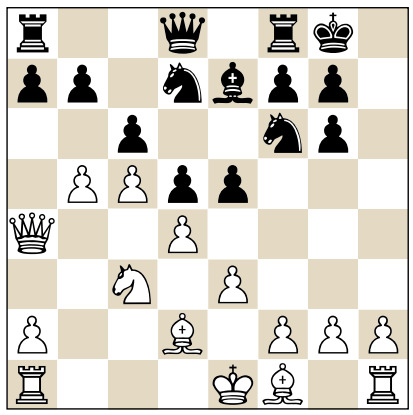


11...0-0 By playing simply you can live to a hundred! Indeed, it cannot be said that Black seriously exerted himself in this game. However, the fact that he went in for such play demanded great courage.

White cannot be punished immediately – 11...exd4 12.exd4 ♖h4?! 13.f4 and the rook only comes under attack.

The ‘silicon’ recommendation is 11...♔f8!?.

12.♕a4? This is going too far. White is seriously behind in development and he cannot permit himself such play. The normal development of events would be 12.bxc6 bxc6 13.♗d3.



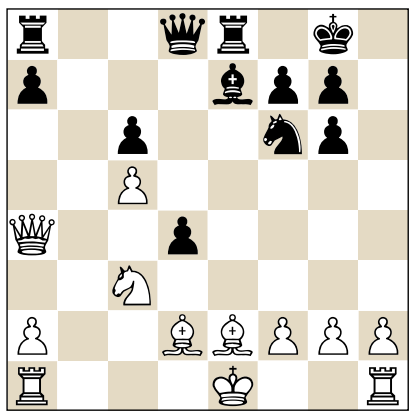
12...♖e8

Routinely played. 12...exd4 13.exd4 ♗xc5! 14.dxc5 ♘xc5 15.♕a3 ♕e7+ 16.♔d1 and for some reason after the unexpected 16...cxb5 Black firmly seizes the initiative.

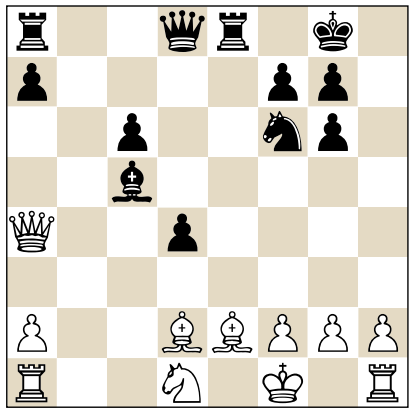
13.bxc6 bxc6 14.♗e2 exd4 15.exd4 ♘xc5

Rather unexpectedly, this is stronger than ...♗xc5 with the idea of then capturing with the knight with gain of tempo: 15...♗xc5 16.dxc5 ♘xc5 17.♕a3 ♕d6 18.0-0 d4 19.♗f3 and White is not worse.

16.dxc5 d4



17.0-0 Enforced caution. Black wins straightforwardly, but in places prettily, after 17.♘d1 ♗xc5 18.♔f1 (18.♕c4 d3) and now:



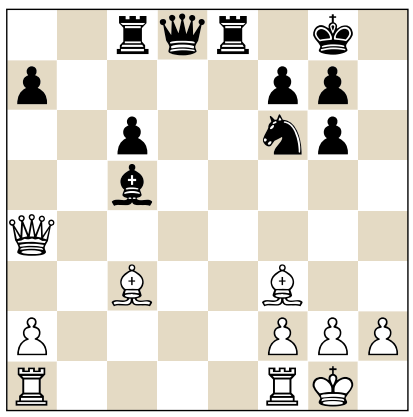
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

A) 18...♘e4 19.♕c2 (19.♗a5 d3 20.♗xd8 dxe2+ 21.♔xe2 (21.♔e1 exd1♕+−+) 21...♘c3+ 22.♔f3 ♘xa4−+) 19...d3 20.♗xd3 ♘xd2+ 21.♕xd2 ♗b4 22.♕xb4 ♕xd3+ 23.♔g1 ♕a3 24.♕c3 ♖ad8 winning.
B) Another, more complicated, way is 18...♖xe2 19.♔xe2 ♕e7+ 20.♔f1 ♖e8 21.♕a6 (21.♕c4 ♘e4 22.♗a5 ♗b6−+) 21...♘e4 22.♗a5 (22.♕d3 ♘xd2+ 23.♕xd2 ♗b4−+) 22...♗b6 23.g3 ♘c5 winning.

17...dxc3 18.♗xc3 ♗xc5 19.♗f3

White appears to have got away with a slight fright – two bishops in an open position often compensate even for a healthy pawn, and the one on c6 is altogether some barely living veteran of military action.

19...♖c8

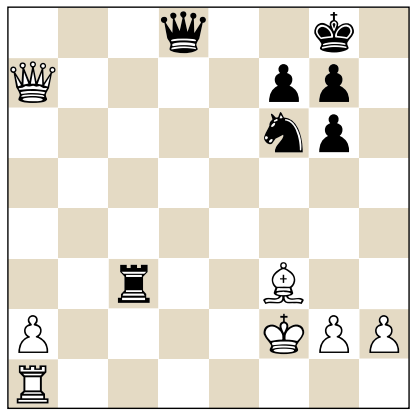


20.♗xc6?! Over-hasty. White does not sense the danger.

20...♖e2! 21.♗f3?

Having embarked on something, it is hard not to continue in the same vein. He should have tried 21.♗e1!?.

21...♖xf2 22.♖xf2 ♗xf2+ 23.♔xf2 ♖xc3 24.♕xa7 It is surprising, but the game naturally concludes within two moves. It would be sly of me to say that I had seen this pretty combination beforehand, but I felt that there was definite potential for Black in this position, and all the same nothing better is apparent.



24...♘e4+!

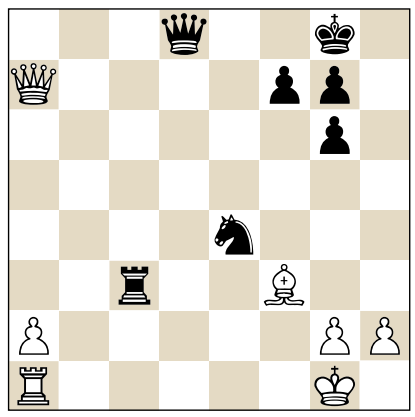
This was largely found by a simple search. Time was spent more on checking that this did indeed work – Black's combination really looks too study-like.

The rook can be moved back to c8, but this only helps White: 24...♖c7 25.♕a8 ♖c8 26.♕a7.

Nothing is given by 24...♘g4+ 25.♔g1 ♖a3 26.♕c5 ♖a5 27.♕b4, when White emerges unscathed.

25.♔g1

Of course, the main variation is 25.♗xe4 ♖c7 26.♕a8 ♖c8 27.♕b7 ♕d4+ 28.♔g3 ♖c3+ (I saw at least a draw here after 28...♕e5+, and, of course, I would have gone in for this position, rather than give the feeble check 25...♕h4+) 29.♗f3 ♖c4!−+.



25...♖a3!

Virtually the most attractive finish in my entire career! The three black pieces take away all the queen's squares on the enormously long diagonal. It is not often that one sees such piece coordination!

White resigned.

■ ■ ■

MARIA EMELIANOVA

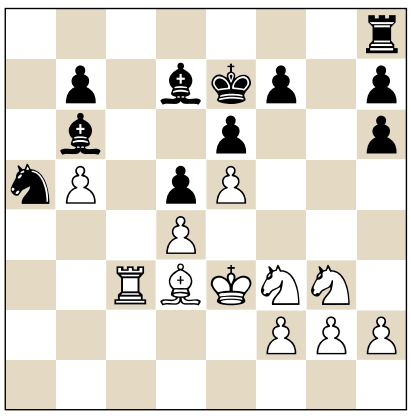
Nikita Vitiugov had an excellent start. He decided his game against Matthias Blübaum with an aesthetically pleasing combination. 'Virtually the most attractive finish in my entire career!'

ERIC VAN REEM

Public interest was heart-warming, both in Karlsruhe and Baden-Baden. Not surprisingly Magnus Carlsen was the main target for the camera's and phones of the fans.

Vitiugov also won his second game, a positional masterpiece that had an interesting background. The Russian opened with 1.e4, which was countered, perhaps unsurprisingly, by 1...e6. The French has been Meier's pet opening for as long as memory serves, but Vitiugov wrote an acclaimed book on the opening, *The French Defence Reloaded*. Meier was not worried, as he explained after the game: 'It's always interesting when you have a knowledgeable opponent. I don't really mind.'

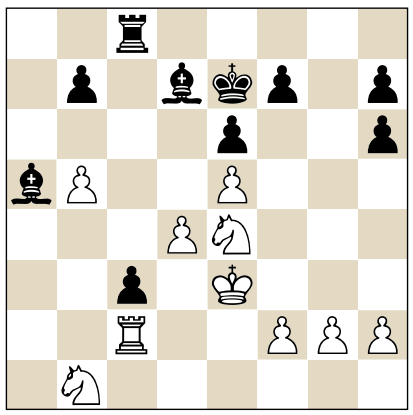
Nikita Vitiugov
Georg Meier
Karlsruhe 2018 (2)



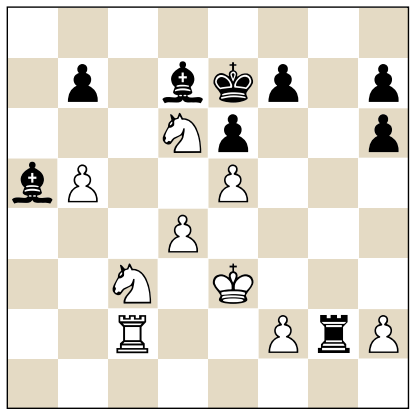
position after 22.axb5

In a balanced position, Meier made a mistake. Putting his knight on c4 was 'a miscalculation', Meier said. He forgot that b7 was hanging after White's ♘d6. That was an important tempo, and he never got back into the game. Vitiugov did not see this move coming, as he observed at the press conference: 'I had missed this, but I think it is a good blunder.'

22...♘c4+? 23.♗xc4 ♖c8 24.♘d2 ♗a5 25.♖c2 dxc4 26.♘ge4 c3 27.♘b1 White stays in control, although his pieces are moving backward. It is remarkable to see that the black bishops are pretty useless.



27...♖g8?! Meier desperately wants to create some counterplay, but 27....♖c4 (Leko) 28.♘bxc3 ♗xb5 29.♘d6 ♖xc3+ 30.♖xc3 ♗xc3 31.♘xb5 ♗b4 32.♔d3 h5 33.♔c4 might have been a better chance. **28.♘bxc3 ♖xg2 29.♘d6**



As said, Meier had forgotten that when the knight comes to d6, it wins a tempo because b7 is unprotected.
29...♖xh2 30.♘xb7 ♗b6 31.♘c5 h5 32.♘xd7! Simple and strong. White's pawn is faster. **32...♔xd7 33.♘e4 h4 34.♖c6 ♗d8 35.♘c5+ ♔e8 36.b6 ♖h1 37.b7 h3 38.b8♕ h2 39.♖c8** 1-0.

On to Baden-Baden

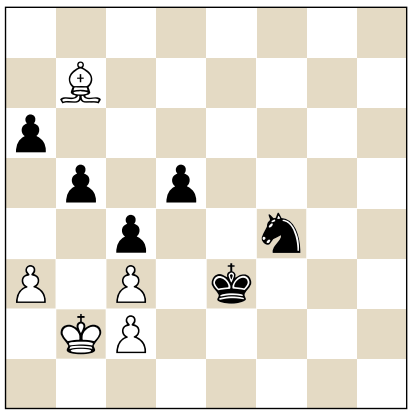
In the Karlsruhe part only Maxime Vachier-Lagrave could keep up with Vitiugov's pace. The Frenchman won a theoretical battle against Vishy Anand in Round 2, and beat Hou Yifan the next day. They were topping the table after three rounds when the tournament moved to Baden-Baden, the home of main sponsor Grenke AG, specialized in leasing, banking and factoring.

According to a survey by *Focus Money*, Grenke was the most popular leasing company in Germany in 2017. Founded by Wolfgang Grenke, the company is now a multinational that operates in 31 countries all over the world. Besides a successful entrepreneur, 67-year-old Grenke is a sponsor of sports and arts. Over the years he has invested large sums in chess, including the Baden-Baden Chess Centre and the super-strong Baden-Baden Bundesliga team that has its home there.

The Baden-Baden Chess Centre also served as the venue for the final part. Caruana was picking up pace, winning

both in Round 3 and Round 4. But he was lucky in Round 6, when Hou Yifan missed a study-like win:

Fabiano Caruana
Hou Yifan
Baden-Baden 2018 (6)

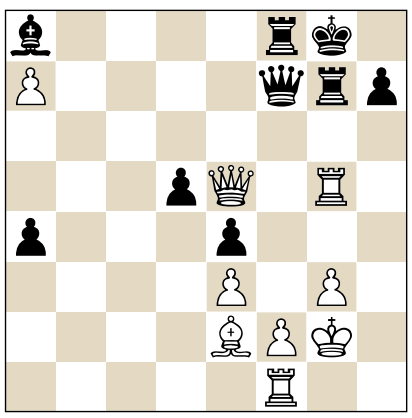


position after 64.♗b7

Hou played **64...a5** but it was very difficult to see the beautiful idea 64...♔d2 65.♗xa6 ♘d3+!! 66.♔b1 (66.cxd3 d4! 67.cxd4 c3+) 66...♘e1 67.♗xb5 ♘xc2 68.a4 d4!, which is winning.

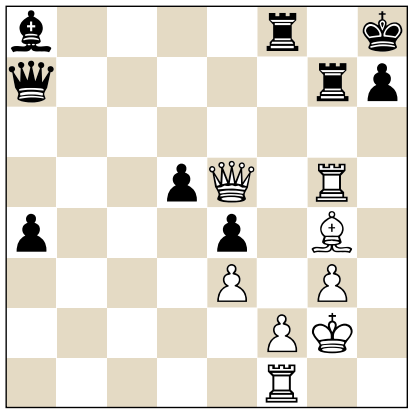
Hou tried every possibility for the remainder of the game, but to no avail, and a draw was eventually agreed on move 98, after more than seven hours of play – a narrow escape for the Challenger. In the previous round, the World Champion had also escaped, against Georg Meier.

Georg Meier
Magnus Carlsen
Baden-Baden 2018 (5)



position after 37.♖g5

In shared time-trouble, Carlsen went astray with **37...♕xa7** Meier found the correct **38.♗g4** and after **38...♔h8** he was just one move away from scoring a full point. But with only seconds on the clock he played



39.♖a1?, which led to a draw. After 39.♖h1! ♕e7 40.♖xh7+ ♔xh7 41.♖h5+ both players missed the mate after 41....♔g6: 42.♖h6+! ♔f7 (42...♔xh6 43.♕h5 mate) 43.♕h5+ ♖g6 44.♕xg6 mate.

After the game, Carlsen was obviously relieved: 'I'm still in the tournament, for sure. It's not been brilliant so far, but it's never too late to start playing well.'

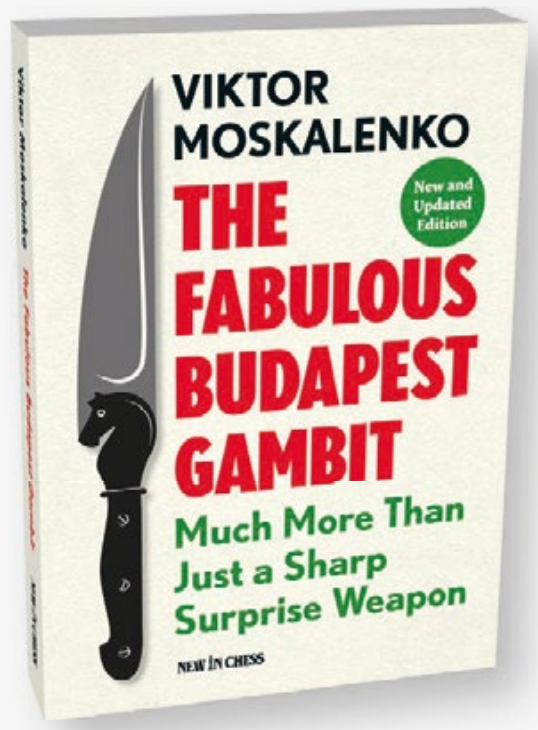
Memories of Berlin

As both Caruana and Carlsen won in Round 7 and drew in Round 8, the American went into the final round leading with 5½/8, while Carlsen and the solid Vitiugov trailed by half a point, 5/8. Carlsen was to play as Black against Vishy Anand, but the all-decisive game turned out to be Vitiugov-Caruana.

Once Anand-Carlsen had ended in a draw, the situation became even more reminiscent of the last-round scenario at the Candidates. Caruana was once again facing a Russian opponent with the black pieces and a draw was now enough for him to secure sole tournament victory. However, by the time the World Champion and his predecessor agreed a draw, Fabiano's position was already so good that, just as in Berlin, the thought of offering a draw never crossed his mind.

We bring you this key game with comments by Peter Leko. The Hungarian was one of the commentators at the Grenke Classic and did a wonderful job that gained him many new fans both at the venue and online.

HUNDREDS OF IMPROVEMENTS & NEW IDEAS



"I am happy to admit that I am big fan of Moskalenko's books. His writing inspires me (..) An updated version of *The Fabulous Budapest Gambit* is definitely a welcome sight. Quite a lot has changed, including the addition of 50 extra pages, new games and introductions plus, tantalizingly, a promise of 'proof that the Fajarowicz Gambit is entirely playable'(..) Moskalenko provides evidence that Black is OK (..) Maybe this book will inspire readers to take up the Budapest Gambit, at least as an occasional surprise weapon."
Sean Marsh, CHESS Magazine

288 pages | €27.95 | available at your local (chess)bookseller or at www.newinchess.com

NOTES BY
Peter Leko

Nikita Vitiugov
Fabiano Caruana
Baden-Baden 2018 (9)
Petroff Defence, Steinitz Variation

This was the decisive game of the tournament. Nikita Vitiugov had made a very good impression by starting the tournament with two wins against the German players. Later, he also stood his ground against the world elite, and after defending a difficult endgame against none other than Magnus Carlsen in Round 8, he was White in the last round against the leader Fabiano Caruana.

Obviously, Nikita came to the last game determined to fight for victory with the white pieces, but one should not forget that he had had to defend for more than six hours against Carlsen the day before, and towards the end of a tournament your energy level gets critical anyway!

As for Fabiano, he was very much in the same shoes as in the final round of the Candidates, and I think he felt confident to tackle another big challenge.

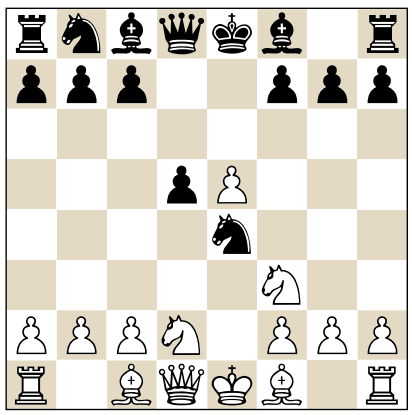
1.e4 It remained interesting to see which opening Nikita would choose. I have him in my mind as a very strong 1.d4 player, but in this tournament he mostly played 1.e4. I guess his opponents were not exactly sure what to expect either.

1...e5 2.♘f3 ♘f6

Fabiano sticks to his beloved Petroff, which had served him so well in the past month!

3.d4 ♘xe4 4.dxe5 One of the most ambitious ways of fighting the Russian Defence, leading to double-edged positions. As in Grischuk's game against Caruana in the last round of the Candidates. A déjà vu!

4...d5 5.♘bd2



5...♕d7!! Caruana demonstrates great character! Many have been wondering how Fabiano spent those few days between the end of the Candidates and the start of the Grenke Chess Classic. Apparently, the fresh Challenger did find time and energy to work on chess, despite the well-deserved celebrations and his interview duties! As for me, when watching the Grischuk-Caruana game live, I had expected to see this shocking novelty already back then! I happened to stumble on this idea when discussing this line with a friend (yes, I have many ideas in the openings, but this one was not mine!). Even after many hours of work I had not managed to come up with a clear answer as to how to deal with this 'shocker', which is the second line on the engines' high-depth!

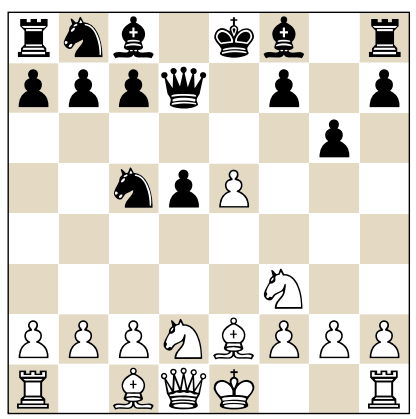
'I happened to stumble on this idea when discussing this line with a friend (yes, I have many ideas in the openings, but this one was not mine!).'

Theoretically speaking, there is nothing wrong with either 5...♘xd2 or 5...♘c5, but in a critical last-round game, a well-timed surprise is worth gold! Only future analysis and games will provide an answer as regards the objective strength of the 5...♕d7 novelty.

6.♗d3 The critical test. The idea of Black's last move was to keep the knight on e4 as long as possible, because it hinders White's harmonious development.

Taking the knight, 6.♘xe4, gives White nothing here: 6...dxe4 7.♘d4 ♘c6 8.♗b5 and after 8...♗c5! 9.♘xc6 bxc6 10.♕xd7+ ♗xd7 Black is too active. The modest looking 6.♗e2!? does deserve attention.

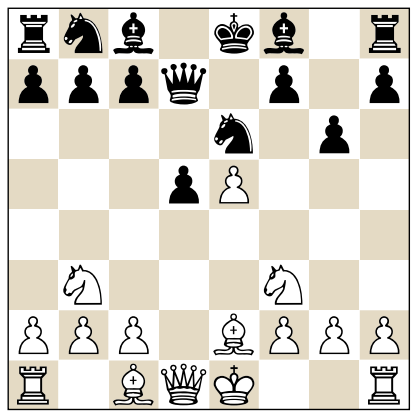
6...♘c5 Black regains the 'lost tempo'. **7.♗e2 g6!?**



Fabiano continues with original play. The move is ambitious, because the bishop on g7 would be an ideal piece in the long run; but it also costs time!

8.♘b3 The thematic move in this variation, but White had another interesting way to treat the position: 8.0-0 ♗g7, and now the energetic 9.b4! ♘a4 (9...♘e6 10.c4!) 10.c4! ♘c3 11.♕e1 leads to a huge chaos, but since White is clearly ahead in development, his chances of successfully fighting for the initiative are quite real!

8...♘e6



9.♗e3?

I am not a big fan of this move and believe that this decision is the reason why White went on to lose this game! Yeah, I know it sounds cruel, since it is only move 9, but sometimes chess is brutal!

In this variation, it is typical and important to continue chasing the black knight with 9.♘bd4! ♗g7 (9...c5 10.♘xe6 fxe6 11.h4! would be just great for White) 10.♘xe6 ♕xe6 11.0-0 0-0 12.♖e1 and it is difficult to give a clear assessment, but contrary to the game here White seems to be in control of the proceedings.

9...c5!

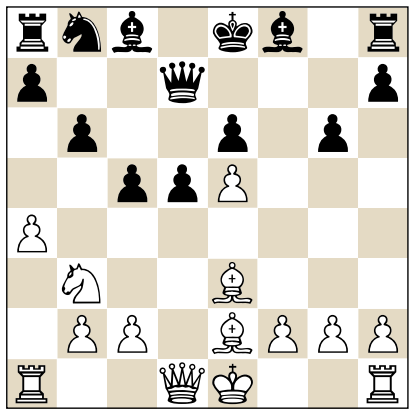
Now the knight on b3 remains a headache. Practically speaking, Black already has the easier play.

10.♘g5

White can't do without the exchange of the e6-knight, but now Black gets the chance to take back on e6 with ...fxe6 ! This recapture guarantees Black a very dynamic pawn structure.

10...b6 11.♘xe6 fxe6 12.a4

The logical follow-up. White can't really play it safe (or solid), as the following line demonstrates: 12.c3 ♘c6 13.f4 ♗h6! (this is very annoying) 14.0-0 ♗b7 (14...♘xe5 15.♗xc5 bxc5 16.fxe5 is a mess, because the Black king is stuck in the middle) 15.♕d2, and here both 15...0-0 and 15...0-0-0!? are simply very good for Black, without any counterplay for White.



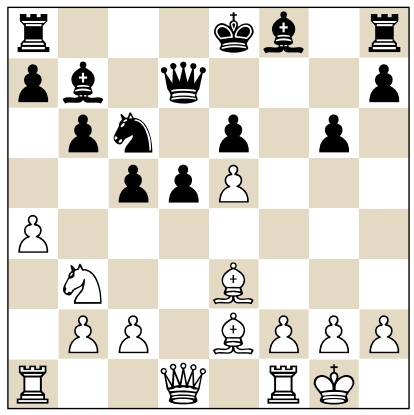
12...♗b7!

Still keeping the bishop on f8!

13.0-0

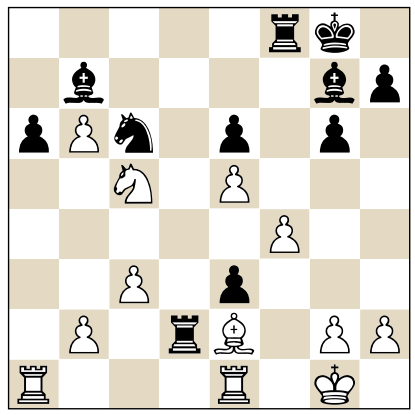
White had the chance to activate the bishop with 13.♗g5, but after 13...♗g7 14.f4 0-0 15.0-0 ♘c6, it is not clear what White has really achieved. Black will continue with ...♘e7, and the bishop on g5 might become a target.

13...♘c6



14.f4

This natural move might be a serious inaccuracy. With the help of an engine it is easy to claim that 14.c3! would have been much more precise: 14...♗g7 (there is no direct refutation of 14...♘xe5, but the quiet 15.♖e1! and the engine's evaluation of 0.00 quickly convince us that White has enough compensation) 15.f4. With this move order White has avoided ...♗h6, and the extra tempo allows for 'strategic brilliancy' after 15...0-0 16.♗b5! (now White has the time to play this!) 16...a6 17.♗e2!, and the game gets very sharp if Black wants to play 'principled' with 17...♖ad8 18.a5 d4 19.axb6!? dxe3 20.♕xd7 ♖xd7 21.♘xc5 ♖d2 22.♖fe1



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

and while humans would evaluate this as a complete mess, for an engine it is just another 0.00!

14...♗h6!

This is the reason why Fabiano wanted to keep his bishop on f8! Now Black is taking over the initiative

MARIA EMELIANOVA

What a way to continue! Only days after their huge success in the Berlin Candidates, Fabiano Caruana and his second Rustam Kasimdzhanov again had good reason to be in high spirits.

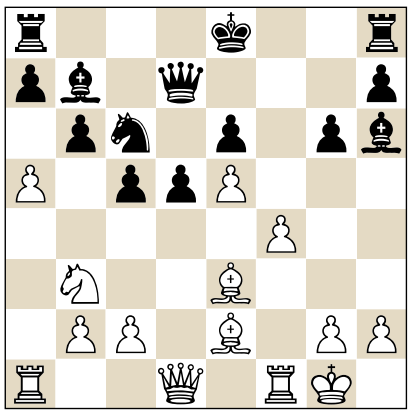
MARIA EMELIANOVA

For the final rounds the Grenke Classic moved to the beautifully located Baden-Baden Chess Centre, the home of the super-strong Baden-Baden Bundesliga team.

and, combined with the great central pawn structure, this is becoming too much to handle for White.

15.a5

White continues his plan. The only problem is that it does not lead anywhere! During the live commentary we had looked at this exact position. Black's next move impressed me a lot, and I immediately got the feeling that White was in trouble!



15...♘e7!

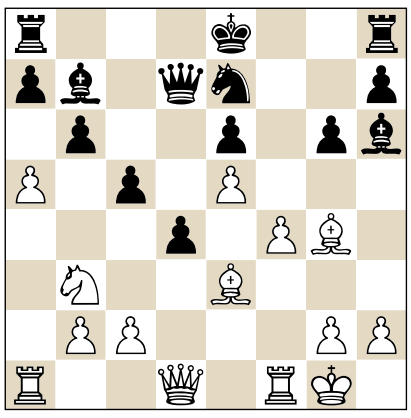
Once it's been played it feels very natural, but sometimes actually playing such moves makes a huge difference!

16.♗g4

One feels that Nikita is trying very hard to create something, but unfortunately for him, all active ideas only force Black to improve the position.

The engine still suggests that after 16.g3 0-0 17.h4 White is kind of OK, but such ideas don't really cross your mind, unless you are completely desperate! Nikita was obviously very motivated, and switching to this 'new mode' is kind of impossible at this point.

16...d4!



I have the feeling that White was sort of provoking this advance, because now at last there is a clear plan to get the knight to e4. The only problem is that it will never happen, or at least not with a happy ending.

17.♗c1 0-0 18.♕d3

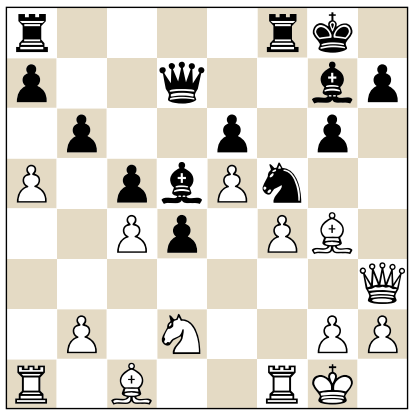
White threatens a double attack with ♕h3, but Black can deal with this threat easily.

18...♗d5!

A nice stabilizer! Unfortunately for White, 19.♘d2 is impossible, because the f4-pawn is hanging.

19.♕h3 ♗g7 20.♘d2 ♘f5 21.c4!

A very good move! Nikita is fighting back!



21...dxc3!

A great practical decision. Black parts with the strong d4-pawn in order to get access to an open file.

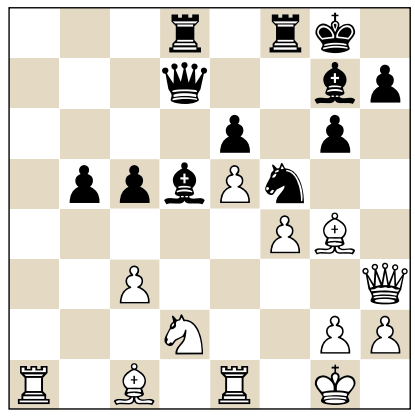
The engine is not sure if, objectively, this was the best move, but it suited Fabiano perfectly in this tournament situation. Black has easy play without needing to worry about anything. The engine's preference is 21...♗c6, but it leads to much more complex play.

22.bxc3 ♖ad8 23.axb6 axb6 24.♖e1

Still trying to create play, but it was high time to forget about any ambition and start playing for exchanges.

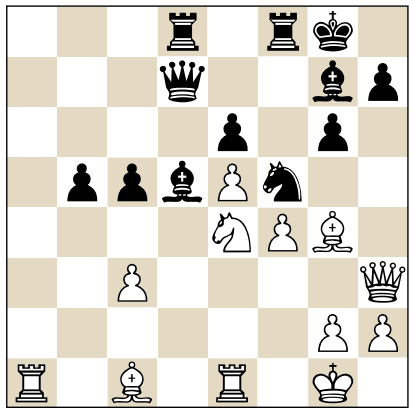
It is sad, but 24.♗f3 was called for: 24...b5 25.♗xd5 ♕xd5 26.♕f3, and White should be able to defend this position, but clearly Black will try to 'press for free'. I guess this evaluation was the reason why it was not really appealing to White to play like this.

24...b5



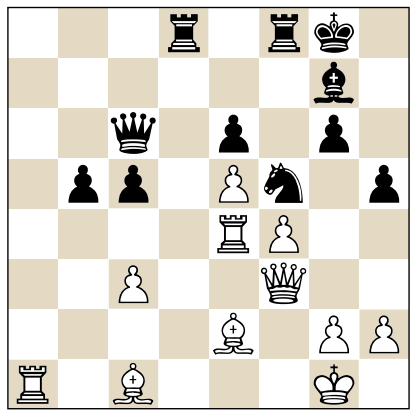
25.♘e4?

Finally the knight reaches its desired destination, but it turns out that it would have been better off not to...
Still, 25.♗f3 was the correct way to play.



25...♕e7

After the game Fabiano showed some lines in which he wanted to play ...♕e7 anyway, so this was very natural to him, but a golden opportunity was missed!
It came as a shock that the most un-human move was kind of winning for Black here. The engines were screaming for 25...♗xe4!!. Normally you only consider giving up your most valuable piece if you see an automatic win. Here the win is quite obscure, something which human intelligence has problems understanding: 26.♖xe4 h5! 27.♗e2 ♕c6! 28.♕f3



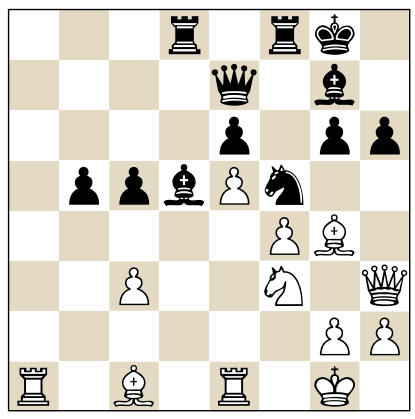
ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

It feels that White has stabilized, so you stop calculating here, given that you have been 'great enough' to have reached this point at all: 28...♘h4! 29.♕e3 c4!, and the engine evaluates this as winning for Black, because White is completely helpless in the long run. Black slowly improves his position to the maximum, starting with ...♖a8.

26.♘g5

The journey of this poor knight continues...
Again 26.♗f3! was called for, and suddenly White would have been close to equalizing.

26...h6 27.♘f3



Judit Polgar's Chess Set, by DGT

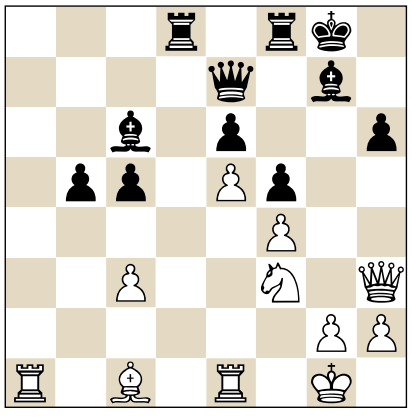
Fine handcrafted set, specially selected by Judit Polgar
A very personal selection of chess pieces
Packed in a beautiful wooden box
Chess board signed 'Polgar Judit – the Queen of Chess'

Judit Polgar chess pieces:
King height 95 mm (3.74") with two extra queens

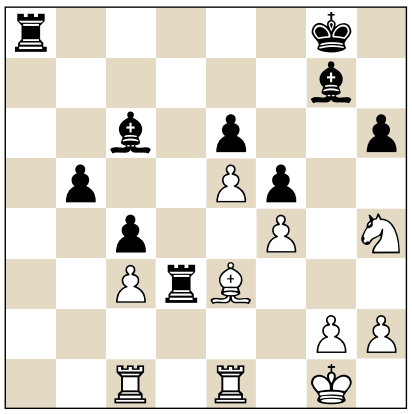
Judit Polgar Chess Board:
500 x 500 x 13mm (19.7" x 19.7" x .51")
Tournament size squares:
55 x 55 mm (2.17" x 2.17")

normal price: board €139, pieces €89
special New In Chess price: board + pieces = ~~€228~~ €199
www.newinchess.com

27...♗c6
Always a pleasure to make such a move. Black is ready to enter with ...♖d3.
28.♗xf5
Very sad, but there is no good move, and Nikita was also getting into serious time-trouble already at this point.
28...gxf5

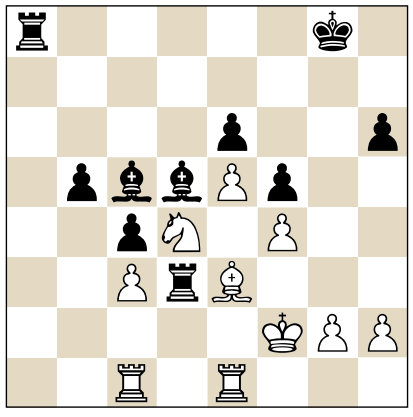


Now Black has a technically winning position.
29.♗e3 ♖d3 30.♖ac1 ♖a8
Black's active rooks and unchallenged light-squared bishop completely dominate the position.
31.♕h4 ♕xh4 32.♘xh4 c4

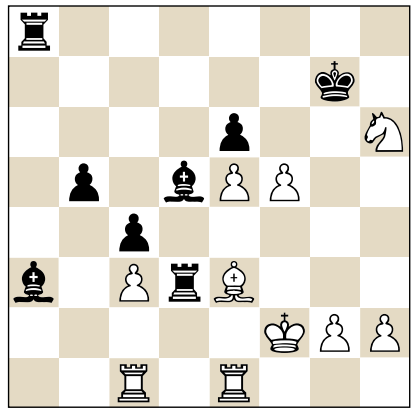


33.♔f2
33.♗c5 might look more tenacious, but in fact it also loses easily: 33...♖a2 34.♔f1 ♗f8 35.♗xf8 ♔xf8 36.♖e2 ♖a3 37.♖ec2 ♗e4 38.♔f2 ♔e8 (White is completely paralysed) 39.g3 ♔d7, and now he is even in some kind of zugzwang. But even if this were not the case, Black just continues with ...♔c6-c5, and White would probably be happy to resign!

33...♗f8 34.♘f3 ♗d5
Again the engine's main winning move is giving up the dream bishop: 34...♗xf3 35.gxf3 (35.♔xf3 ♗c5) 35...♖a3 36.♗d4 b4, but in time-trouble this is the last thing you want to do!
35.♘d4 ♗c5



36.♘xf5?
It's very hard to resist this shot, but in fact it only hastens the end.
White should have tried 36.♘c2 instead, when Fabi claimed he first wanted to return to e7 and later decide on the winning plan. In fact, Black can win with 36...♗a3!. Not an easy decision in time-trouble! 37.♘xa3 ♖xa3, and despite the opposite-coloured bishops, White has no chance of survival: 38.♗c5 ♖d2+ 39.♖e2 ♖xe2+ 40.♔xe2 ♖a2+ 41.♔e3 ♖xg2 42.h4 ♔f7, and White is in a hopeless situation.
36...♗a3!
Impressive play, Caruana is not afraid of ghosts!
37.♘xh6+ ♔g7 38.f5



38...♗xc1 A very composed decision! The temptation to finish this game with the 'stylish' 38...♖xe3 could have ended with a great surprise after 39.♔xe3 ♗xc1+ (39...♔xh6!?) 40.♖xc1 ♔xh6, and instead of resigning, White has a brilliant idea with 41.g4! ♔g5 42.f6! ♔xg4 43.♖f1, and all of a sudden Black would need to show great skills to win the game again!
39.♗xc1 ♖xc3 40.f6+ ♔g6 White resigned. Another impressive tournament victory for Caruana right after winning the Candidates! The excitement is growing for the upcoming match against World Champion Magnus Carlsen later this year. Wishing the players a lot of stamina for the coming preparation phase and a fascinating World Championship match!

■ ■ ■

Summing up, Fabiano Caruana concluded: 'It was a great tournament, and at the end especially, it couldn't have gone any better. Coupled with some luck, it was enough. I wasn't really thinking about winning the tournament, but I kept getting chances and I took them.'

Karlsruhe / Baden-Baden 2018 **cat. XX**

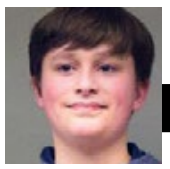
					1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		TPR
1	Fabiano Caruana	IGM	USA	2784	*	½	½	1	1	½	½	½	1	1	6½	2896
2	Magnus Carlsen	IGM	NOR	2843	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	5½	2803
3	Levon Aronian	IGM	ARM	2794	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	5	2772
4	Nikita Vitiugov	IGM	RUS	2735	0	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	½	1	5	2778
5	Maxime Vachier-Lagrave	IGM	FRA	2789	0	½	½	½	*	½	1	1	½	½	5	2772
6	Matthias Blübaum	IGM	GER	2631	½	½	½	0	½	*	1	½	½	½	4½	2747
7	Vishy Anand	IGM	IND	2776	½	½	½	½	0	0	*	½	½	½	3½	2651
8	Hou Yifan	IGM	CHN	2654	½	0	½	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	3½	2664
9	Arkadij Naiditsch	IGM	AZE	2701	0	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	1	3½	2659
10	Georg Meier	IGM	GER	2648	0	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	0	*	3	2620

Remarkably mature

Besides Caruana's win, there was another highlight that the organizers were highly pleased with. The Open ended in a sensational victory of 13-year-old Vincent Keymer. Keymer doesn't appear out of the blue (two of his games from the U-12 Junior World Championship already featured in Franco Zaninotto's book *Super Chess Kids*), but this was his international breakthrough. In a strong field that boasted GMs like Bacrot, Rapport, Wang Hao, Andreikin, Kasimdzhanov, Korobov, Shirov and Van Wely, the young German was seeded 99th(!). Nevertheless, he remained unbeaten and his final score of 8/9 was 1½ points higher than what he required for his first GM norm.

Keymer is obviously a great talent, and he can rely on a professional team. He is sponsored by Grenke, and his parents, who are both musicians, get advice from Hans-Walter Schmitt, the organizer of the legendary Chess Classics in Frankfurt and Mainz. Since November last year, Vincent has been working with Peter Leko, a cooperation that both of them greatly enjoy.

In the final round, Keymer faced Richard Rapport with the black pieces. It turned into an epic encounter and it was the icing on the cake for Keymer, who crowned a wonderful tournament with a remarkably mature effort. Here it is, in his own words.

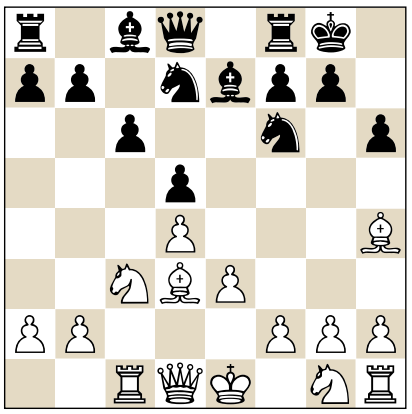


NOTES BY
Vincent Keymer

Richard Rapport
Vincent Keymer
Karlsruhe Open 2018 (9)
Queen's Gambit Declined

Before this game I was relatively relaxed, since my GM norm was in the bag and I was only playing for the final standings. I also thought that with Black against a Super GM my chances weren't that big, even though the tournament had gone well so far. The most exciting aspect was no doubt to be playing on the same stage as the top players in the Classic and being watched by many people (including various players in the Classic). As I had had little time to prepare, and Rapport is a player who knows many openings, I had spent hardly any time on preparation.

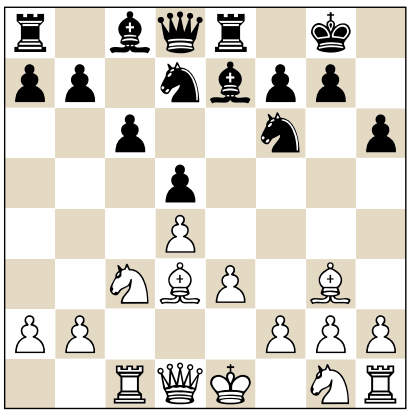
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.♗g5 ♗e7 5.e3 h6 6.♗h4 0-0 7.♖c1 ♘bd7 8.cxd5 exd5 9.♗d3 c6



We have reached a normal Carlsbad structure, but White has already played his rook to c1 and Black has already moved ...h6.

10.♗g3 My opponent would like to keep as much material on the board as possible, but in doing so he loses a tempo. After 10.♘f3 ♘e4 11.♗xe7 ♕xe7 12.0-0 ♘df6 the position is equal.

10...♖e8

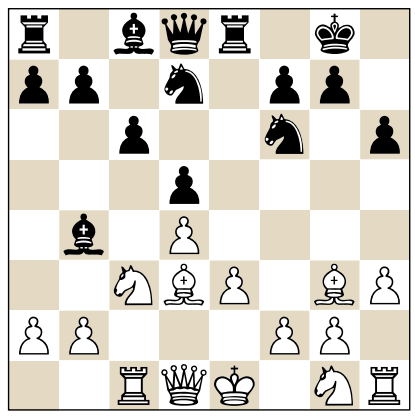


11.h3 Again an attempt to keep the bishop. After 11.♘f3 ♘h5 12.♗e5 ♘xe5 13.dxe5 g6 Black eyes the g4-square for his bishop and can withdraw his knight to g7.

11...♗b4

I felt that it made sense to play actively here, because White had proceeded very slowly.

I had seen 11...♘e4, but rejected it because of 12.♗xe4 dxe4 13.♘xe4, which was wrong, as Black could equalize with 13...♕b6 (13...♗h4 is also OK, but slightly imprecise) 14.♘e2 ♕xb2.

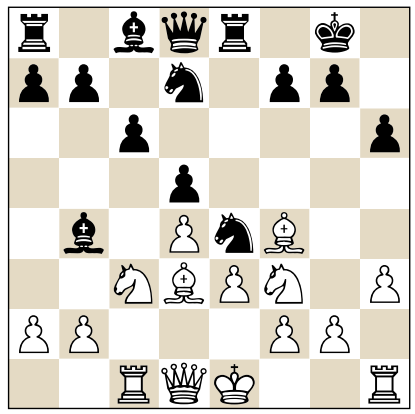


12.♘f3 White has no time to parry the threat ...♘e4. Instead, he develops as quickly as possible.

12...♘e4 13.♗f4

White has to save his bishop.

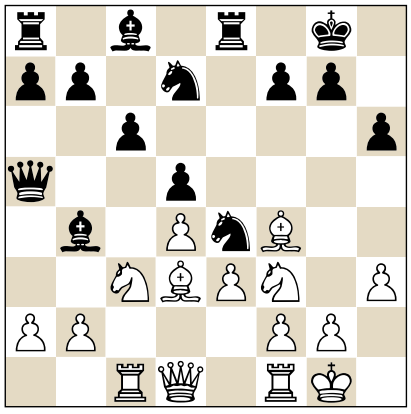
13.♗xe4 doesn't lose a tempo, but gives up an important bishop with nothing in return: 13...♖xe4 14.0-0 ♖e8, and Black has no problems.



13...c5!?

I wanted to continue my active play. The safest continuation was 13...♘df6 14.0-0 ♗d6 15.♘e5 ♗f5, when the bishop can retreat to h7.

Dangerous was 13...♕a5, hoping to exploit the fact that White has not castled yet and trying to win a pawn. Now after 14.0-0 there is:



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

A) 14...♘xc3 15.bxc3 ♗a3 (15...♗xc3 16.g4!! c5 17.g5 c4 18.♗b1) 16.♖b1 ♕xc3 17.g4!!. With several of Black's pieces on the queenside, White attacks on the kingside, with a clear advantage that is well worth a pawn;

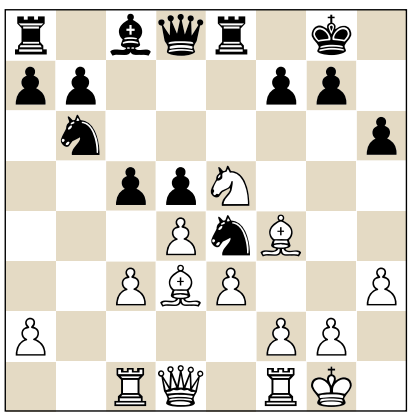
B) 14...♗xc3 15.bxc3 ♕xa2. This is probably best, but it looks very dangerous and nobody would play this on the board: 16.c4 dxc4 17.♗xc4 ♕a3 18.d5 (or 18.♕c2 ♕e7 19.♗d3) 18...cxd5 19.♕xd5, with excellent compensation.

14.0-0 ♗xc3?!

Giving up the bishop is a questionable decision. Better was 14...♘xc3 15.bxc3 ♗a3 16.♖b1 c4, with equality.

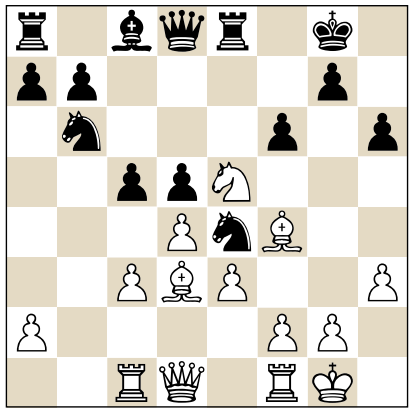
15.bxc3 ♘b6 16.♘e5

Now White is better.



16...f6

It wasn't pleasant to play the position after 16...c4 17.♗b1 ♗f5 18.f3 ♘d6 19.e4 ♗h7 20.♘g4 dxe4 21.♗xd6 ♕xd6 22.fxe4 ♗xe4 23.♘f6+ gxf6 24.♕g4+ ♔f8 25.♗xe4, but still this was better than the other options.

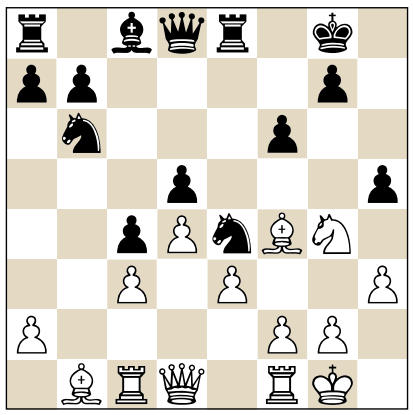


17.♘g4?!

This move almost forces Black to accept the piece sacrifice, which looks – and is – very dangerous for him. Therefore this is the natural move to play.

Still, 17.♘g6!? poses Black some problems, and according to the engine it was better than the logical text-move, for instance: 17...♗f5 18.dxc5 ♘c4 19.♕h5 ♗xg6 20.♕xg6 ♘e5 21.♗xe5 ♖xe5 22.h4.

17...c4 18.♗b1 h5



19.♘h2

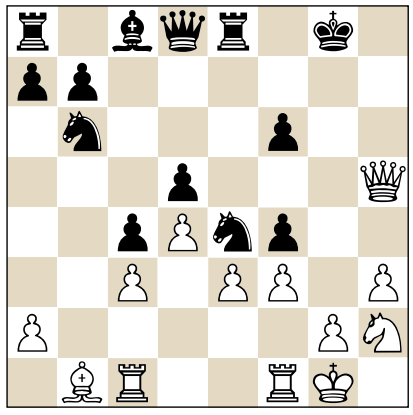
19.♘h6+!? looks very dangerous, but according to the engine Black is fine after 19...gxh6 20.♕xh5 ♖e7 21.f3 ♘g5 22.h4 ♘e6 23.♗xh6 ♕e8 24.♗g6 ♕c6.

19...g5 20.♕xh5

The logical move, which certainly offers very good chances.

Interesting was 20.f3!? ♘xc3 21.♖xc3 gxf4 22.exf4 f5 23.♖e1! (23.g4 ♗d7) 23...♖xe1+ (otherwise White plays ♖e5, and Black is in trouble) 24.♕xe1 ♕f6! (Black has to allow ♕e8+, which is hard to do over the board) 25.♕e8+ ♔g7 26.♖e3 ♗d7 27.♕xh5 c3! (an important resource!) and Black is fine.

20...gxf4 21.f3

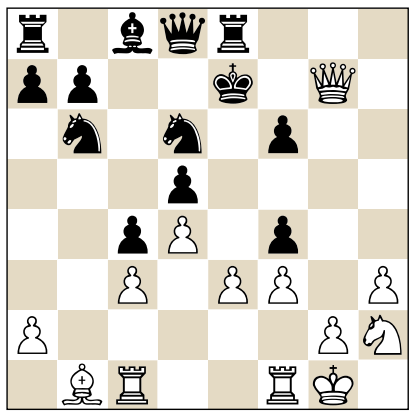


21...♘d6

After 21...♘g3 22.♕g6+ ♔f8 23.♖fe1 I had missed 23...f5!, when White has to take a draw with 24.♕h6+ ♔g8 25.♕g6+ ♔f8.

Bad was 21...♘d2? 22.♗g6 ♖e7 23.♖fe1, and Black can no longer defend.

22.♕h7+ ♔f8 23.♕h6+ ♔e7 24.♕g7+

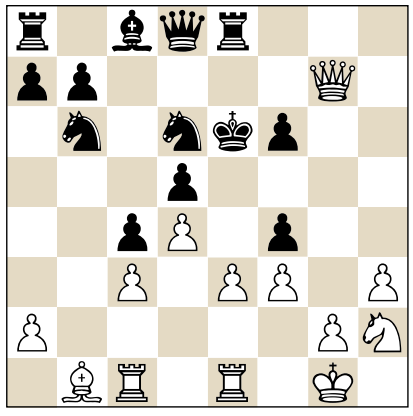


24...♔e6

During the game I was very happy to find this saving move. At this point we both had little enough time left on the clock.

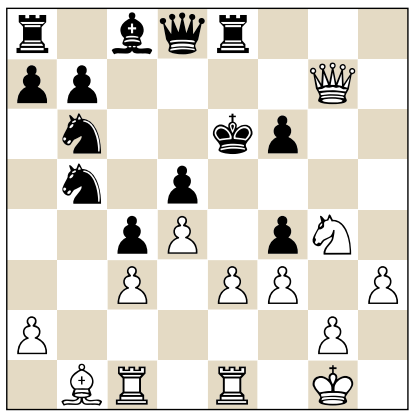
I was under the impression that 24...♘f7!? was bad because of 25.exf4 ♖f8 26.♖fe1+ (26.♗g6 runs into 26...♔d6!, and White is in trouble), but after 26...♔d6 27.♘g4 ♗xg4 28.fxg4 ♔c6 29.♖e6+ ♘d6 30.♖ce1 the situation is totally unclear.

25.♖fe1



25...♖e7?!

This was the resource I had seen. However, the best move in the position was 25...♘b5. But with little time it is more difficult to calculate and clearly more dangerous. Play might continue 26.♘g4! (the best try – 26.exf4+ looks logical and is the first move one considers, but it is also bad: 26...♔d6 27.♖xe8 ♕xe8 28.♕xf6+ ♕e6 29.♕e5+ ♕xe5 30.fxe5+ ♔e7, and the endgame with the weak pawn on c3 is simply bad for White), and now:



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

A) One possibility is 26...♔d6 27.♘xf6 ♖xe3 28.♖xe3 fxe3 29.♖e1, when the position remains very sharp with chances for both sides, but objectively speaking it should be equal.

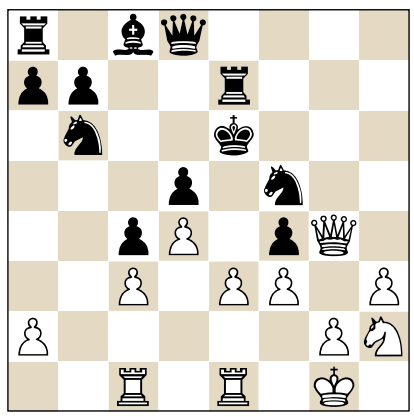
B) Another one is 26...♖g8 27.♕h6 ♖f8 (only now) 28.e4 ♔d7 (28...♔d6? 29.♘xf6!) 29.♕xf4 ♔c6, with utter chaos.

C) The immediate 26...♖f8 is bad in view of 27.e4.

26.♕g4+ f5

The logical move. Black's position looks OK now, but is still highly problematic.

27.♗xf5+ ♘xf5



28.♕g6+?

This natural move squanders White's advantage and even turns the tables. The right move was the engine's 28.e4!. Hard to find in time-trouble and difficult to calculate. After 28...♔d7 29.exf5 both 29...♖f7 30.♕xf4 ♔c6 31.♖e5 ♕d6 32.♘g4 ♗d7 33.♘e3 and 29...♖xe1+ 30.♖xe1 ♔c6 31.♕xf4 ♕f8 32.♖e5 clearly favour White.

ERIC VAN REEM

Vincent Keymer goes over his spectacular win against Richard Rapport with his trainer Peter Leko. It took him some time to believe that he had really won.

28...♔d7 29.♕xf5+ ♔c6

30.♕xf4 ♗e6

The white knight is really bad, and now Black is clearly better.

31.e4 ♕g8?!

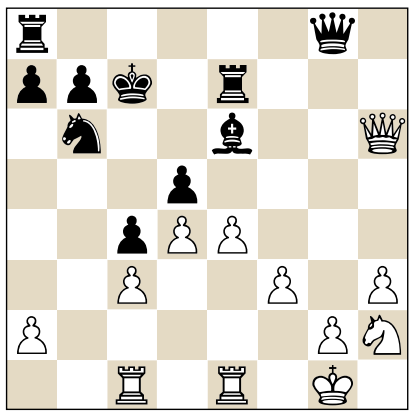
Stronger was 31...♕f8! 32.♕d2 ♕g7.

32.♕h6?!

Misses his chance. Even if after 32.a4! ♖f8 33.♕d2 dxe4 34.fxe4 ♔d7! Black is still better.

32...♔c7

32...♔d7!? was more precise.



33.♔h1

This makes Black's life easier.

Karlsruhe Open 2018

1	Vincent Keymer	IM	GER	2403	8
2	Anton Korobov	IGM	UKR	2664	7½
3	Dmitry Gordievsky	IGM	RUS	2630	7½
4	Alexey Shirov	IGM	LAT	2651	7½
5	Maxime Lagarde	IGM	FRA	2587	7
6	Falko Bindrich	IGM	GER	2602	7
7	Daniel Sadzikowski	IGM	POL	2583	7
7	Burak Firat	IGM	TUR	2453	7
9	Gergely Antal	IGM	HUN	2540	7
9	Alessio Valsecchi	IM	ITA	2510	7
11	Dmitry Andreikin	IGM	RUS	2712	7
12	Jaime Santos Latasa	IM	ESP	2549	7
13	Dmitrij Kollars	IGM	GER	2534	7
13	Eyal Grinberg	IM	ISR	2448	7
15	Wang Hao	IGM	CHN	2713	7
15	Andreas Heimann	IGM	GER	2574	7
15	Vadim Malakhatko	IGM	BEL	2536	7
18	Konstantin Landa	IGM	RUS	2613	7
19	Etienne Bacrot	IGM	FRA	2718	7
20	Jonas Lampert	IM	GER	2532	7
21	Christopher Noe	IM	GER	2494	7
22	Michael Fedorovsky	IM	GER	2471	7
23	Alberto David	IGM	ITA	2566	7
24	Vladimir Burmakin	IGM	RUS	2522	7
25	Victor Mikhalevski	IGM	ISR	2557	7
26	Fabian Bänziger	FM	SUI	2356	7
27	Richard Rapport	IGM	HUN	2715	6½
28	Borya Ider	IM	FRA	2505	6½
28	Hagen Pötsch	IM	GER	2484	6½
30	Robby Kevlishvili	IM	NED	2472	6½
31	Daniel Fridman	IGM	GER	2637	6½
32	Eric Lobron	IGM	GER	2503	6½
33	Tamas Banusz	IGM	HUN	2618	6½
33	Zdenko Kozul	IGM	CRO	2617	6½
33	Luis Engel		GER	2389	6½
36	Vitaliy Bernadskiy	IGM	UKR	2588	6½
36	Mikolaj Tomczak	FM	POL	2394	6½
38	Gabor Papp	IGM	HUN	2604	6½
39	Rainer Buhmann	IGM	GER	2588	6½
39	Milos Pavlovic	IGM	SRB	2466	6½
41	Grzegorz Nasuta	IM	POL	2459	6½
42	Loek van Wely	IGM	NED	2667	6½
	787 players, 9 rounds				

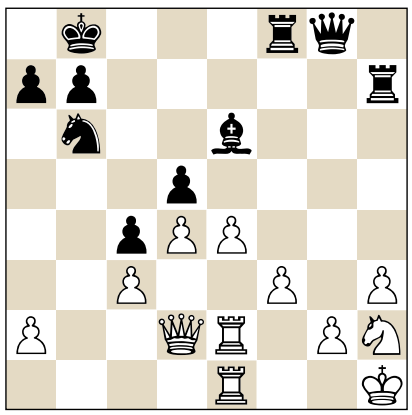
‘After actually winning, I couldn’t believe it at first, because I had not even dared to hope for half a point.’

33.a4!? is the most stubborn idea in this position, threatening a5: 33...dxe4 34.♖xe4 ♖d8 35.♖ce1 (35.♘g4 ♘d5) 35...♖d6, although Black retains the best chances.

33...♖f8

White could probably still have held here, but it is very difficult.

34.♖e2 ♖h7 35.♕d2 ♔b8 36.♖ce1



36...dxe4 I wanted to restrict the range of my opponent’s rook battery, while at the same time opening the f-file for my attack and reducing his pawn majority.

A solid alternative was 36...♕g6, as was 36...♕g3 37.exd5 ♗d7 38.♖e7 ♖xe7 39.♖xe7 ♕d6 40.♖e5 ♘xd5. Now the knight has also come into play and White is on the edge of the precipice.

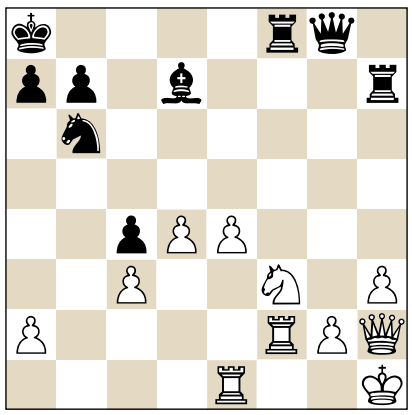
37.fxe4 ♗d7 38.♖f2 ♖e8!?

My plan was to force my opponent to play e5 with ...♖he7 in order to block the pawns on the light squares and to obtain new squares for my pieces.

39.♕f4+ ♔a8 40.♘f3?

Now White is lost. After 40.♖e3 ♖he7 it would have been more difficult for Black to convert his advantage.

40...♖f8 41.♕h2



Here my opponent offered a draw, which I interpreted as a sign of uncertainty and dissatisfaction with his position, as a draw would put an end to his chances to finish in the top 3. I also liked my position, which is why I declined.

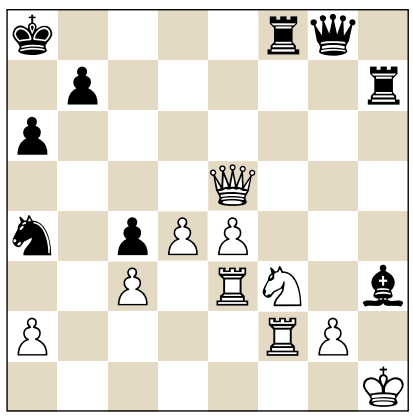
41...♘a4

41...♕h8 42.♔g1 ♖hf7 also wins.

42.♖e3 a6!?

A slight improvement of the black position. White no longer has any useful moves.

43.♕e5 ♗xh3

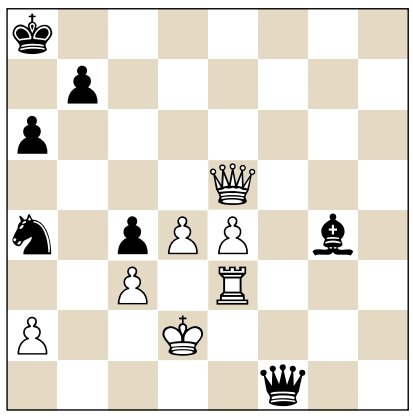


From this moment on, I realized that I would probably win this game.

44.♔g1

During the game 44.gxh3 ♖xh3+ 45.♖h2 ♖g3! was my main variation.

44...♖g7 45.♘h4 ♖xf2 46.♔xf2 ♖xg2+ 47.♘xg2 ♕xg2+ 48.♔e1 ♕f1+ 49.♔d2 ♗g4

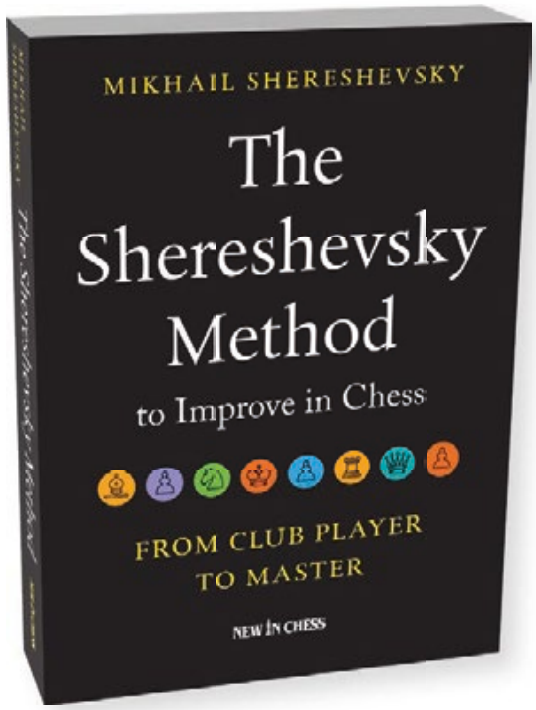


White’s position is hopeless.

50.♕e8+ ♔a7 51.♕xa4 ♕f2+

White resigned.

After actually winning, I couldn’t believe it at first, because I had not even dared to hope for half a point. ■



"New In Chess scored a bit of coup getting this book."
Mark Crowther, editor of The Week In Chess

"A compendium of the author's famous teaching methods, complete with modern developments. A more than excellent instruction book."
B.H.Wilders, Nederlands Dagblad

"This is such a good book. There is certainly enough new material on which to base an entire second volume. Well done, New In Chess! Now sign up the author for another book, as soon as possible."
Sean Marsh, CHESS Magazine

"A good starting point for ambitious players who want to work on their play in a structured way. Shereshevsky covers the most important elements of the game, from the opening through the endgame."
IM Mark Haast, Schaaksite

"A missing link in chess literature (..) A real gem. This book is a must in the library of any chess player."
Miguel Ararat, Florida Chess News

"Two Soviet Classics reimagined as one, and then some (..) Part Three is called 'From the 20th Century to the 21st', and it has an awful lot of absolute gems contained within (..) Reading Part Three can inspire you to dig into the works of other authors based on the recommendations given by Shereshevsky."
Chris Wainscott, Chess Daily News

"This book is a must for all chess trainers and chess players who wish to improve their performance, because it covers all the skills a good chess player needs."
International Master Dirk Schuh

"I have good memories of Shereshevsky's books. It is so good to see him back again. I especially read the chapter 'Do not hurry!' with pleasure; not just because I agree with what he says, but more importantly because it defines the playing style of Magnus Carlsen."
GM Simen Agdestein, long-time trainer of Magnus Carlsen

paperback | 352 pages | €27.95 | available at your local (chess)bookseller or at newinchess.com | a NEW IN CHESS publication

Chess Pattern Recognition

ARTHUR VAN DE OUDEWEETERING

An exchange sac to remember

A knight on the rim can be dim. Certainly when it invites a strong sacrifice.

Richard Rapport
Haik Der Manuelian
Reykjavik 2018
Queen's Gambit Declined

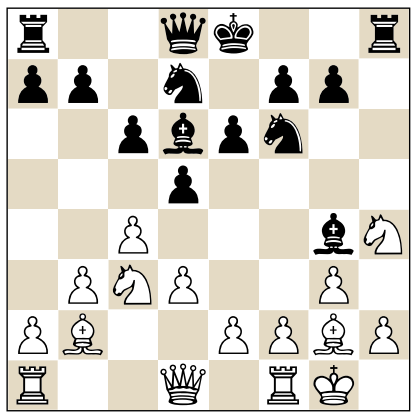
1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♗e7 4.cxd5 exd5 5.♗f4 c6 6.♕c2 ♘f6 7.♘f3 g6 8.e3 ♗f5 9.♗d3 ♗xd3 10.♕xd3 ♘bd7 11.0-0-0 A novelty! Where everybody has played 11.0-0 or 11.h3, Rapport goes for a more scintillating start. **11...0-0 12.h4 b5 13.h5 ♘xh5**

14.♖xh5! The pawn sac has typically opened up the h-file for the white rook to support the attack. However, the rook disappears immediately, as White sacrifices the exchange, eliminating the blockading knight. **14...gxh5 15.♕f5!** The obvious 15.♖h1, deploying the rook, runs into 15...f5 16.♖xh5 ♕e8 17.♖xf5? ♕g6, and Black has organized his defence. Instead, Rapport gradually improves his pieces. **15...f6 16.♘h4** It is not difficult to see where White's pieces should head, only in what order? For now Rapport is postponing ♖h1 and ♕xh5. **16...♖f7** 16...♕e8 17.♗h6. **17.♕xh5 b4?** Driving White's knight in the right direction, which turns out to be a decisive loss of time. 17...♘b6 was needed to create counterplay on the other wing. **18.♘f5 ♗f8 19.♘e2 ♕a5** Now the second knight enters the fray with terrible force after 19...♘b6 20.♗h6 ♘c4 21.♗xf8 ♔xf8 22.♘f4. **20.♔b1 b3 21.axb3 ♕b5 22.♔c2 a5 23.♘c3 ♕b7 24.g4 c5 25.g5 fxg5 26.♕xg5+ ♔h8 27.♖g1 ♗g7 28.♘d6** 1-0.

In the Réti Opening, White's fianchetto and kingside castling may also induce Black to quickly open the h-file.

Jorge Gomez
Diasmany Otero
Santa Clara 2017
Réti Opening, King's Indian Attack

1.♘f3 d5 2.g3 c6 3.♗g2 ♗g4 4.c4 e6 5.b3 ♘d7 6.♗b2 ♘gf6 7.0-0 ♗d6 8.♘c3 h5 9.d3 h4 10.♘xh4

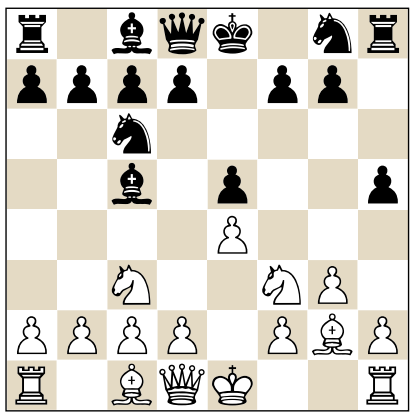


Black sees no reason to wait and immediately gives up the rook. **10...♖xh4 11.gxh4 ♘h5** And rightly so! Apart from the obvious capture ...♕xh4, the knight may jump to f4. White decided to anticipate both with **12.♕e1?** but had a rude awakening: **12...♗f3!** 12...♕xh4 13.f4; 12...♘f4 13.f3. **13.♗c1 ♕xh4 14.h3 ♘f4 15.♗xf3 ♕xh3** 0-1.
A nice miniature win due to White's oversight, but Black would also have had ample compensation after 12.♕d2 ♘f4.

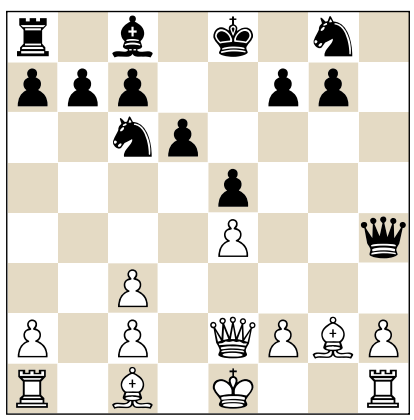
Last year's Aeroflot Open saw Fedoseev risk the same early exchange sacrifice against Ramirez, even when White had not yet castled: 1.♘f3 d5 2.b3 ♗f5 3.♗b2 e6 4.g3 ♘c6 5.♗g2 h5 6.d3 h4 7.♘xh4 ♖xh4 8.gxh4 ♕xh4, after which he eventually just managed to draw by putting up a blockade on the dark squares. He may have been inspired by the following game:

William Hartston
Sergio Mariotti
Skopje 1972
Vienna Game

1.e4 ♘c6 2.♘c3 e5 3.g3 ♗c5 4.♗g2 h5 5.♘f3

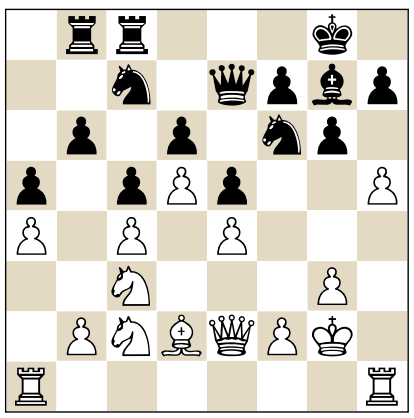


5...h4 6.♘xh4 ♖xh4 7.gxh4 ♕xh4 8.d4 It took a while for Black to repeat this, but in 1984 Khalifman got the chance in the Soviet Junior Championship. Dreev decided that he had sufficient defenders and castled anyway, when El Khalif won a memorable game after 8.0-0 ♘f6 9.♕f3 d6 10.♕g3 ♕h7 11.d3 ♘d4 12.♗e3 ♗d7 13.b4 ♗b6 14.♖ac1 ♘h5 15.♕h4 c6!, when the backward move ...♗d8 suddenly loomed. **8...♗xd4 9.♕e2** White hopes to develop quickly now, and castle queenside. But... **9...♗xc3+! 10.bxc3 d6**



A fine concept by the Italian GM! No king attack here, but White's shattered pawn structure and passive rooks should provide sufficient compensation. **11.0-0 g5! 12.♕e3 f6 13.♕g3 ♕h7 14.♗f3 ♘ge7 15.♖e1 ♘g6** will find it harder to become active. The next game is a painful example of what happens when White patiently directs his pieces to the strong squares.

Michael Stean
Evgeny Ermenkov
Buenos Aires 1978



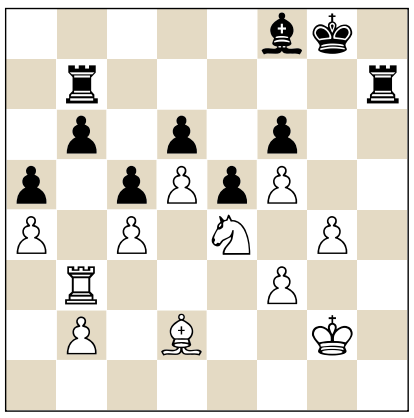
position after 18.h5

18...♘xh5? 19.♖xh5! Chop! **19...gxh5 20.♖h1 ♗f8 21.♕xh5 f6 22.♘e3 ♕f7 23.♕xf7+ ♔xf7 24.♖xh7+ ♔g8 25.♖h1 ♖b7 26.♘f5 ♘e8 27.♘b5 ♖h7 28.♖a1! ♖d8 29.♖a3 ♖dd7 30.♖b3 ♖b7 31.g4 ♖bd7 32.♘c3 ♖b7 33.♘b5 ♖bd7 34.♘c3 ♖b7 35.♘e2 ♘g7 36.♘eg3 ♘xf5 37.exf5!** Typically vacating e4, an ideal post for the knight. **37...♖h4 38.f3 ♖hh7 39.♘e4**

'This exchange sac should be as firmly anchored in your chess knowledge as the Sicilian ...♖x♘c3 probably already was.'

16.♗e3 ♔e7 Black's moves flow from the position, whereas White is struggling for activity. Hartston's despair soon showed. **17.c4 b6 18.c5 bxc5 19.c3 ♘f4 20.♗g4 ♗xg4 21.♕xg4 ♖h8 22.h4 ♕g8 23.♗xf4** After 23.hxg5 the queen returns: 23...♕h7. **23...♖xh4 24.♕g2 exf4 25.e5 ♘xe5 26.♕b7 ♖g4+ 27.♔f1 ♕c4+ 28.♖e2 ♔d7 29.♕e4 f3 30.♕xc4 ♘xc4 31.♖c2 ♖g2 32.♖e1 f5 33.♖ce2 ♔c6** 0-1.

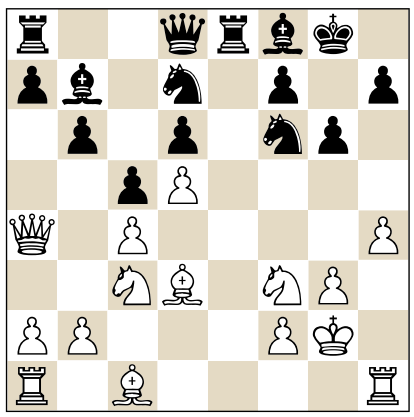
When we chop off the knight on the rim in a closed position, the defender's rooks



39...♖hf7 40.f4 exf4 41.♗xf4 And Ermenkov refused to look at his passive pieces any longer. 1-0.

We finish with an example reminiscent of Rapport's sac, though initially White's queen is still on the queenside.

Alexander Morozevich
Peter Leko
Morelia/Linares 2007



position after 14...♗b7

15.h5 ♘xh5 Two question marks from Marin (Megabase), who calls this positional suicide. Kasimdzhanov (New In Chess 2007/3) was more circumspect, calling White's next a purely positional sacrifice, with long-term compensation. **16.♖xh5 gxh5 17.♘e4** Morozevich goes his own way, preferring this slightly exotic knight jump to a series of natural development moves like ♗f4, ♖h1, ♘h4, queen back to c2 or d1. **17...f5 18.♘eg5 h6 19.♘h3 ♘e5 20.♘xe5 dxe5 21.♗xf5 ♕f6 22.♗e4 ♖e7 23.♕d1 h4** Black should have tried to open lines for his passive rooks. **24.♕h5 hxg3 25.fxg3 ♖g7 26.♗d2** 26.♗xh6 was objectively better, but the text preserved the tension in Leko's time-trouble. **26...♕f7 27.♕e2 ♗c8 28.♘f2 ♗f5 29.♗xf5 ♕xf5 30.♘e4 ♖f7 31.♖h1 ♕g6 32.♖h4 ♔h8 33.♘g5 ♖f5?** And with success! After **34.♘e6 h5 35.♗g5** Black's vulnerable king's position falls apart. **35...♔g8 36.♖xh5 ♖e8** At last and too late. **37.g4 ♖f7 38.♗h4 ♗g7 39.♖g5 ♕h6 40.♕xe5 ♔h8 41.♖xg7 ♕d2+ 42.♔h3 ♕d3+ 43.♗g3 ♖xe6 44.dxe6 ♖xg7 45.e7 ♕h7+ 46.♔g2** 1-0.

No wins guaranteed, but this exchange sac should be as firmly anchored in your chess knowledge as the Sicilian ...♖x♘c3 probably already was. ■

The Blitz Whisperer

Maxim Dlugy

It's not about pawns

Yes, pawns are the soul of chess, no doubt about that. But in Blitz, as **MAXIM DLUGY** shows, there are often other factors that weigh more heavily in the dynamics of a game. The initiative or attacking chances. Or simply exerting pressure.

One of the attractions of Blitz is that in a fast time-control it seems you have much better chances to beat a much stronger player than yourself. This is not just a feeling; it happens to be true. The other day, for instance, a young 1400 player took out a GM-Elect in one of the Blitz tournaments at my Chess Academy.

There are many reasons for this. To begin with, in Blitz different strengths come to the fore. Where one player may need time to gather his thoughts, another one could be impulsive and quick to make decisions. This quality may help against someone who doesn't like to be in a situation in which he or she constantly needs to process new information. Exasperated from constantly being forced to move, a stronger but more thoughtful player may lose his inner balance and start playing impulsively himself, making moves of a much lower quality than he is used to.

Upon seeing such mistakes, he may lose heart and go back to thinking out his choices. This may already have a detrimental effect in a normal game, but in a blitz setting it can be even worse, since the player will quickly fall behind on time and may lose to a weaker opponent.

Another important reason is that if one player is simply faster at seeing tactics, this ability will give him chances throughout the game, as there is likely to be a tactical moment at some point. The rating difference will not matter if the tactic secures the weaker player a significant advantage. It therefore makes sense to play riskier openings, even gambits, against players who prefer to be in control and like to slowly improve their position before starting a major plan.

'If one player is simply faster at seeing tactics, this ability will give him chances throughout the game'

In this column, I will focus on the celebrations for one of the most practical World Champions in history, Emanuel Lasker, who was born 150 years ago, in 1868. Although his birthday falls on December 24th, the German Chess Federation declared this entire year his year, and there will be a wide variety of tributes to the second World Champion.

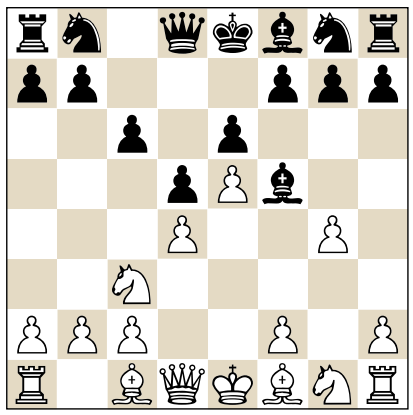
During the Candidates tournament in Berlin, there was a small Lasker exhibition on the ground floor of the venue, the Kühlhaus. And during the final 'round' of the 2017/18 Bundesliga season, when all teams gathered, again in Berlin, for their final three matches, the players started with a large Blitz tournament in honour of the German World Champion.

Evgeny Tomashevsky won by beating Jorden van Foreest in the final. In a display reminiscent of the staunch defender and practical genius Emanuel Lasker, Tomashevsky won his final game with Black from a very bad position.

Let's have a look. And keep in mind that Blitz is not about pawns, but about utilizing all your chances by being more focused than your opponent.

Jorden van Foreest
Evgeny Tomashevsky
Berlin Lasker 150 Blitz final 2018 (2)
Caro-Kann, Advance Variation

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 ♗f5 4.♘c3 e6 5.g4

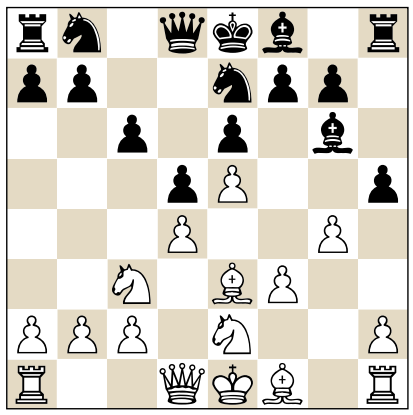


This variation, popularized by John van der Wiel, is very aggressive and is still being debated by the theoreticians.

5...♗g6 6.♘ge2 ♘e7

This move, invariably chosen by Anatoly Karpov and Alexey Dreev in this position, is considered to be more solid than 6...c5, which is preferred by Vishy Anand and Veselin Topalov.

7.♗e3 h5 8.f3!?



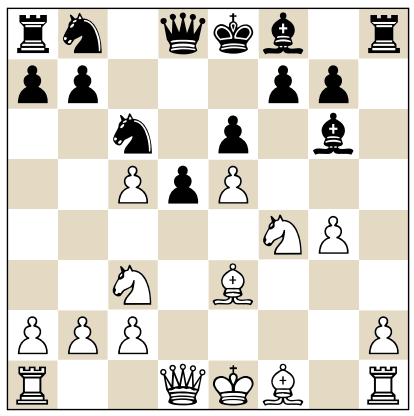
A rare move, making Jorden by far the highest-rated player ever to have played it, compared to the masters trying it in the other four games I found in the database.

8.♘f4 was seen in many GM battles, with Black generally doing quite well.

8...hxg4 9.fxg4 c5

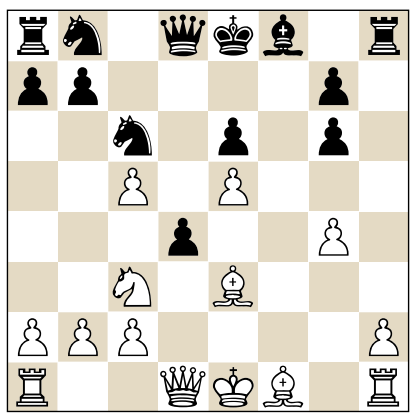
With the kingside and the h4-square a bit loose, White now has to demonstrate the reason for choosing this dubious continuation.

10.dxc5 ♘ec6 11.♘f4



Here it is! The invitation is quite clear! Black is invited into the tactical skirmish that follows after 11...d4. It's quite hard to resist, as the complications actually favour Black. Indeed, Evgeny took only 15 seconds to accept the challenge, which could have been easily avoided with the resolute 11...♗h7!, keeping all the advantages of the position.

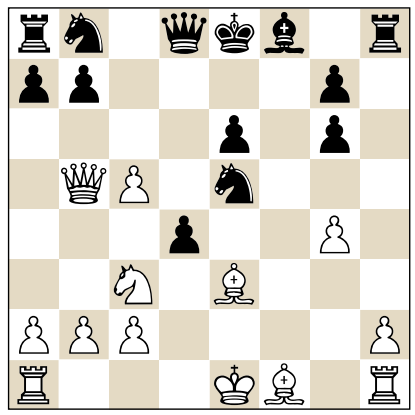
11...d4 12.♘xg6 fxg6



13.♕d3

The more natural 13.♗d3 could be dealt with by a nice fork tactic starting with 13...♘xe5 14.♗xd4 ♕xd4 15.♗xg6+ and ending with 15...♔e7 16.♕xd4 ♘f3+.

13...♘xe5 14.♕b5+



14...♘bc6?

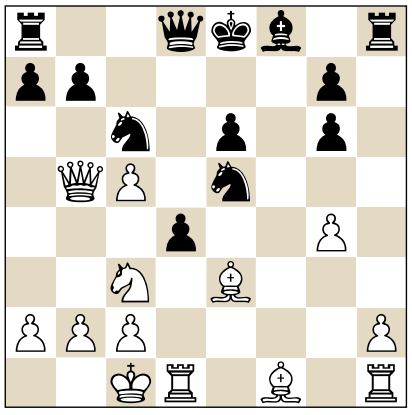
This natural-looking move, played after 15 seconds of thought, is a serious mistake. Evgeny should have spotted that the d4-pawn is already protected by the e5-knight, and that he needed to cover the d-file against the White d1-rook with ...♘bd7.

After 14...♘bd7! 15.0-0-0 dxe3 16.♕xb7 ♖b8 17.♕a6 ♗xc5 18.♕xe6+ ♕e7 Black is completely winning.

15.0-0-0

GEORGIOS SOULEIDIS

The final between Jorden van Foreest and Evgeny Tomashevsky. The Russian won the decisive game in a display reminiscent of the practical genius Emanuel Lasker.



White's risk-taking has paid off. He is better. He has good attacking chances and more time on the clock!

15...a6 16.♕b3

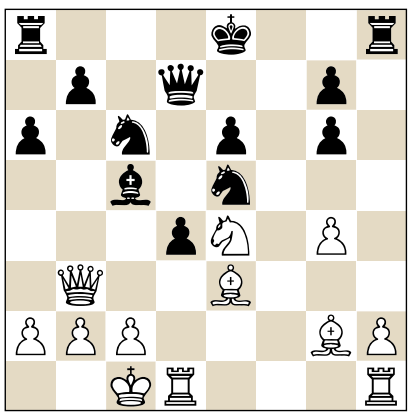
White could also have taken on b7, and after 16.♕xb7 ♖b8 17.♕xa6 ♗xc5 18.♗b5 0-0 19.♗xc6 ♖b6 20.♕a5 ♖xc6 21.♕xd8 ♖xd8 22.♘e2 fight for an advantage as well.

16...♕d7 Evgeny doesn't even consider trading queens after 16...♗xc5 17.♕xe6+ ♕e7, when White will be slightly better, and is planning to castle queenside quickly.

17.♗g2

Jorden is keeping pace to put time-pressure on Black. Otherwise 17.♘a4 and 17.♘e4 were serious options.

17...♗xc5 18.♘e4? This move, missing that White's queen is trapped, took all of one second.



18...♗a7?

Evgeny is trying to catch up on time, and even though the tactical elements in the position are changing, he did not stop long enough to admire them. 18...♗a7 took him four seconds. Instead, after 18...♘a5 19.♘xc5 ♘xb3+ 20.axb3 ♕e7 21.♗xd4 0-0, Black wins the queen for a mere two pieces.

'Strong players focus on their opponents' weaknesses and try to attack them every chance they get.'

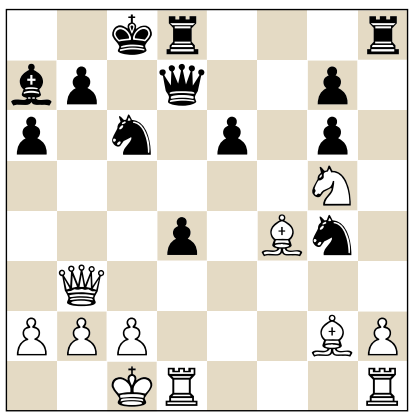
19.♘g5 As you may have already noticed, in a Blitz game strong players focus on their opponents' weaknesses and try to attack them every chance they get. But 19.♗f4 was stronger.

19...0-0-0 The tactical alternative 19...♘a5! 20.♕b4 ♘ac6 would have improved Black's position or led to a draw by repetition.

20.♗f4 I think that at this point White finally noticed the ...♘a5 resource, as otherwise 20.♘xe6 would have been strong. White spent 40 seconds here and found the best move, pointing all his pieces at Black's king.

20...♘xg4

After this move Evgeny was down to 24 seconds against Jorden's full minute, a huge disadvantage. Instincts prevailed now, of course, since Black simply didn't have the luxury of calculating long variations.

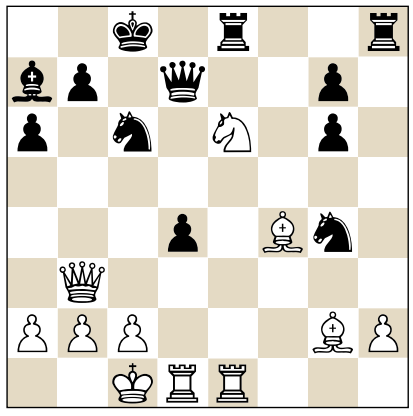


21.♘xe6?!

Again dismissing the ...♘a5 resource. White should have played 21.♖hf1 with a very messy position.

21...♖de8? After 21...♘a5! 22.♕b4 ♕xe6 23.♕xa5 ♗b6 Black plays ...♘e3, and stands much better.

22.♖he1 The position is still quite complicated and contains chances for Black, but it's time to speed up! Evgeny did just that, hoping to use the increment to add time to his clock. Jorden's mistake was to signal his next move ♖he1, as he was taking a couple of seconds hovering over the h-rook before moving it. When your opponent is in time-pressure, do not help him by showing where you are planning to move!

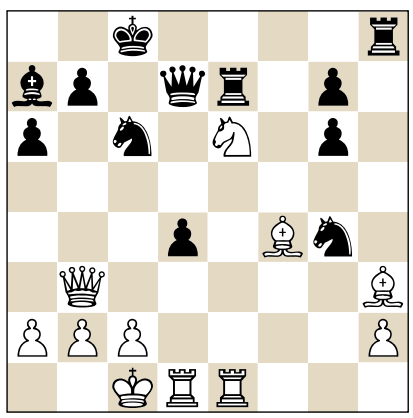


22...♖e7? As Evgeny was preparing for White's ♖he1, he quickly made this losing blunder, allowing White to end the game immediately with a nice combination.

Instead, after the engine's 22...♘f2 Black should survive.

23.♗h3?

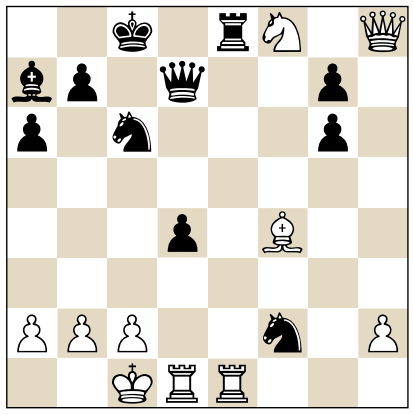
Played after one second. With over 40 seconds on the clock, Jorden could have found 23.♗xc6!, suggested by my 1400+ student in about four seconds, when Black's pieces are overworked after 23...♕xc6 (or 23...bxc6 24.♘c5 ♕d8 25.♕a4) 24.♘xd4.



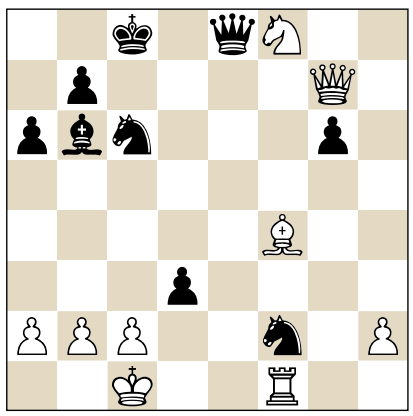
23...♖xh3

Evgeny spent five seconds on this move, getting rid of the dangerous

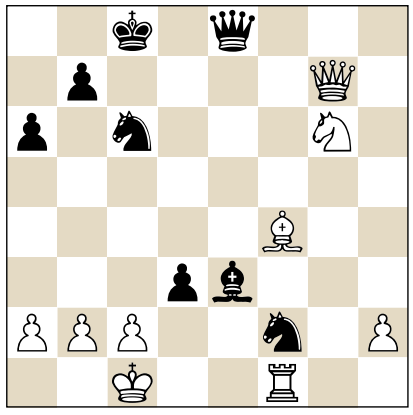
bishop, but winning back the rook on d1. 23...♘f2 was also quite playable.
24.♕xh3 ♘f2 25.♕h8+ ♖e8 26.♘f8



26...♕f7? In Blitz it's important to register your opponent's real threats. Here Evgeny assumed that his queen was attacked and moved it, but in reality after 26...♘xd1 27.♖xe8+ ♕xe8 28.♔xd1 ♗b6 Black is fine.
27.♖xe8+ ♕xe8 28.♕xg7 ♗b6 29.♖f1 d3!
Black's only chance of counterplay, which somehow completely threw Jorden. He spent most of his time at this point, missing both the defensive idea ♗d2, stopping Black's main threat of ...♗e3+, and the simplifying and aggressive ♕xg6, guaranteeing a better endgame without complications. Instead, he spotted that his bishop would be defended by the knight on g6 and played:



30.♘xg6? I think in a blitz game the practical 30.♕xg6 ♕xf8 31.♕e6+ ♔d8 32.♗e3 d2+ 33.♔xd2 ♗xe3+ 34.♕xe3 ♘e4+ 35.♔e2, with excellent winning chances, would be easier to spot than the retreat 30.♗d2, which simply wins. I would imagine players like Karpov, Anand and Kamsky, who don't care whether their pieces move forward or backwards, would find this move much easier.
30...♗e3+ Objectively, 30...♕e2! was stronger, forcing White to find 31.♘e7+ ♘xe7 32.♕c3+ ♘c6 33.♖e1 ♕g4 34.♕f6 ♗d8 35.♕f7 dxc2 36.♔xc2, when only Black could be better. But under the gun, Evgeny checks.



31.♗xe3?? This was an interesting moment. As Jorden's clock was ticking down from 22 seconds to 12, he was about to play the correct move, with advantage. He signalled he was about to move his king, and then abruptly changed his mind and took the bishop. It's clear he should have found a reason to eliminate the capture first, rather than overthink ♔b1. After 31.♔b1 dxc2+ (stronger is 31...♗xf4 32.♘xf4 d2 33.♘d3! ♘xd3 34.♕g4+! ♔c7 35.♖d1 ♘de5 36.♕e2!) 32.♔a1! (the move likely missed by White), Black surprisingly has nothing but a lost position.
31...♕xe3+ 32.♔b1 dxc2+
White is quickly mated now, so Jorden resigned.

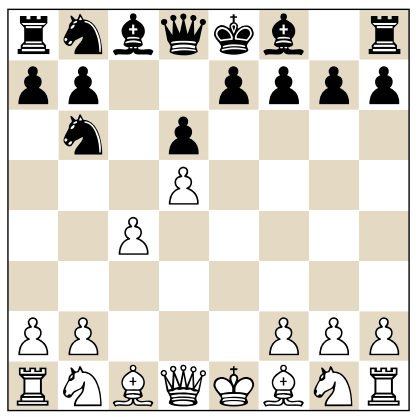
Attacking genius Alexey Shirov

The next game features Alexey Shirov, who finished shared 10th in the Blitz tournament. With Shirov it has never been about pawns! The fierce attacking genius we know and love, like his compatriot Misha Tal, believes in the magic of developed pieces. This is why when his opponents decide to take his pawns, it's always a joy to watch and see what happens.

GEORGIOS SOULEIDIS

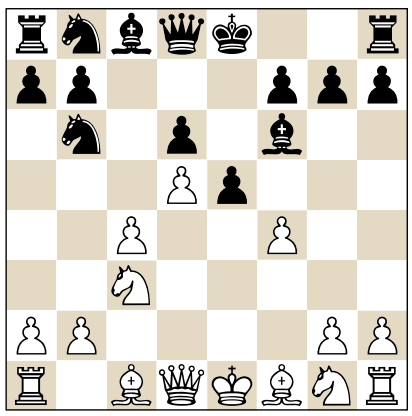
When Alexey Shirov's opponents decide to take his pawns, it is always a joy to watch and see what happens.

Alexey Shirov
Stefan Löffler
Berlin Lasker 150 Blitz final 2018
Alekhine Defence, Exchange Variation
1.e4 ♘f6 2.e5 ♘d5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 ♘b6 5.exd6 cxd6 6.d5

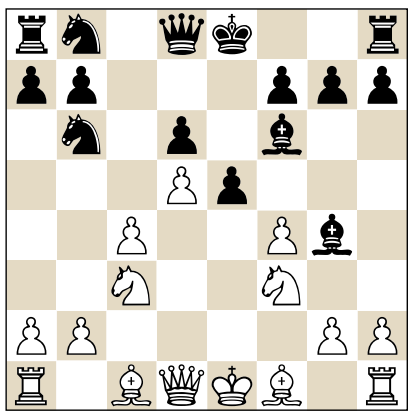


This slightly off-beat continuation against the Alekhine Defence is Shirov's favourite. He takes space and plays typical plans connected with this pawn structure. It's an advantage to know the pawn structure you are playing in a blitz game, since this makes it much easier to come up with the correct piece placement and strategy, saving important time on the clock.

6...e5
This natural move doesn't score well, but looks like a decent option. After 6...g6 it looks like 7.♕d4 will force unthinkable damage to Black's kingside. However, a sober view shows that after the relentless 7...e5 8.dxe6 f6!!, Black will develop swiftly and will have good chances after, say, 9.♘c3 ♘c6 10.♕f4 d5!.
7.♘c3 ♗e7 8.f4 ♗f6



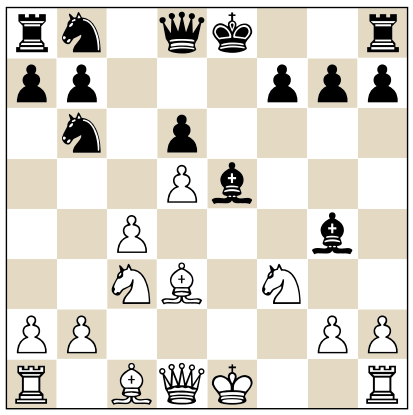
It's a bit unnatural to place a bishop behind the e-pawn. Castling would be better, keeping the flexibility to develop for later.
9.♘f3 ♗g4
Black is really trying to pinpoint issues with White's development, but in so doing forgets about his king. His moves are not bad, but are taking too long. Having spent over a minute on the last two moves, he has no better position than if he had simply castled and developed one of his pieces. A piece of practical advice: if it doesn't look critical – play fast!



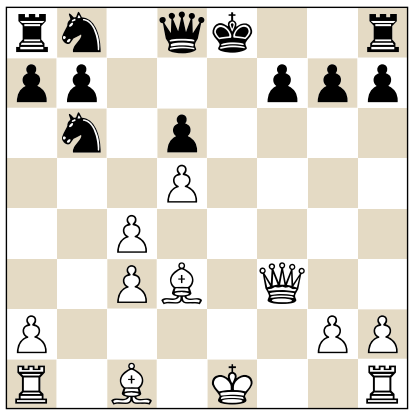
10.fxe5
Shirov took a full minute on this move, evidently trying to make use of his opponent's unwillingness to castle.

'A piece of practical advice: if it doesn't look critical – play fast!'

Instead of opening up Black's bishop, it was better to continue developing with 10.♗d3, with a comfortable position.
10...♗xe5 11.♗d3

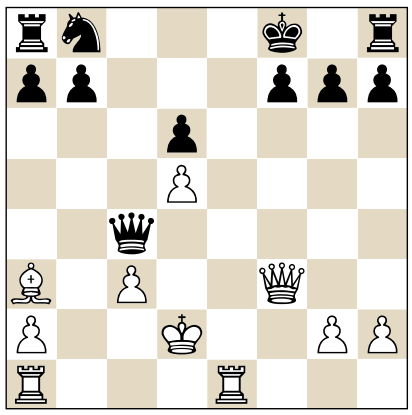


11...♗xc3+
Not a bad move, but one that starts a flawed tactical exchange that wins a pawn and loses the game. Black stands well and should preserve his positional advantage with 11...♘8d7 12.0-0 ♖c8 13.♘xe5 ♘xe5! (13...♗xd1 would be bad after 14.♘xf7 ♕c7 15.♘xh8) 14.♕d2 ♘bxc4 15.♗xc4 ♖xc4, and Black is OK.
12.bxc3 ♗xf3 13.♕xf3



13...♘xc4? Black is fully in the game after 13...♕e7+ 14.♔f2 ♘8d7 15.♗f4 0-0 16.♖he1 ♕f6, but the greedy (although ambitious) attempt played in the game will be refuted prettily.
14.♗xc4 ♕h4+ 15.♔d2!
The strongest, although if Black had seen 15.♕g3 ♕xc4 16.♕xg7, he would have refrained from this continuation in the first place.

15...♕xc4 16.♖e1+ ♔f8 17.♗a3!
There are few players better than Alexey at finishing off such positions. It's just not about the pawn!



17...♕a6?
Black imagines he can fend off all of White's pieces with one queen. The only chance was 17...♘d7, bringing in some help. After 17...♘d7 18.♗xd6+ ♔g8 19.♖e7 ♘f6 20.♗e5! ♖d8 White would have to come up with 21.♔e1 ♕xd5 22.♖d1 ♕xd1+ 23.♕xd1 ♖xd1+ 24.♔xd1 h5 25.♗xf6 gxf6 26.♖xb7, with a winning rook and pawn ending. No endgames now!
18.♕e4! g6 19.♕e7+ ♔g7 20.♗xd6 And Black resigned.

New kid on the block
As always, I was delighted to hear there is a new kid on the block, when 13-year old Vincent Keymer won the star-studded Grenke Chess Open with 8/9 points, ahead of four 2700 players and dozens of other grandmasters. It was therefore great to see him play blitz in Berlin and to notice the natural ability of this teenager to find good moves with seeming ease. Just like Shirov, he scored 11½/16 and finished ahead of quite a few GMs.

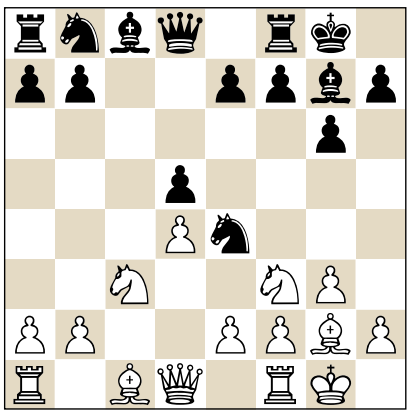
In the following game, Vincent finds himself a little out of book but is not fazed and continues to play confidently, eventually securing a point against Dennis Wagner, a young German GM.

GEORGIOS SOULEIDIS

New kid on the block Vincent Keymer showed that he is also a consummate blitz player, scoring an impressive 11½/16.

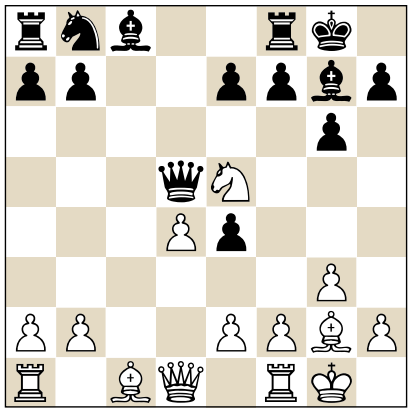
Vincent Keymer
Dennis Wagner
Berlin Lasker 150 Blitz 2018
Grünfeld Indian, Fianchetto Variation

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 c6 4.♗g2 d5 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.♘f3 ♗g7 7.♘c3 0-0 8.0-0 ♘e4



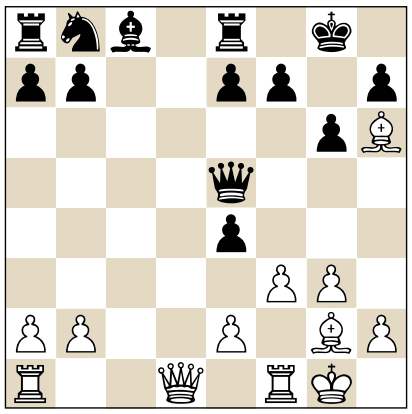
9.♘xe4
This is a reasonable attempt at creating an advantage, along with 9.♘e5 and even 9.♘g5, as played by Aronian against Anand in the St. Louis Blitz 2017.

9...dxe4 10.♘e5 ♕d5



Judging by his body language, it seems that this move surprised Vincent, who was trying to come up with something reasonable. After 38 seconds he came up with the risky, but fairly logical 11.f3, trying to activate his bishop. A more solid approach begs for 11.b3 or 11.♗e3 instead, developing the pieces that can be developed without pawn structure issues.

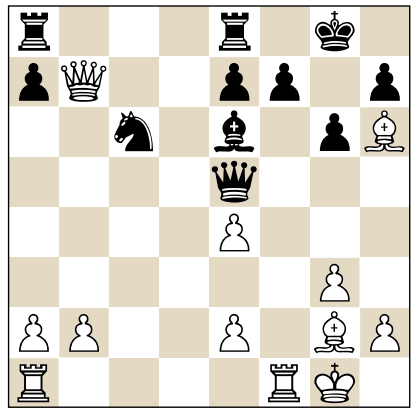
11.f3!? ♗xe5 12.dxe5 ♕xe5 13.♗h6 ♖e8



14.♕b3
Vincent didn't take much time to bring out most of his pieces. Even though Black can now take on f3 and technically go up a pawn, it's quite clear that he will be unable to keep it, so he should look for the best way to develop pieces instead.

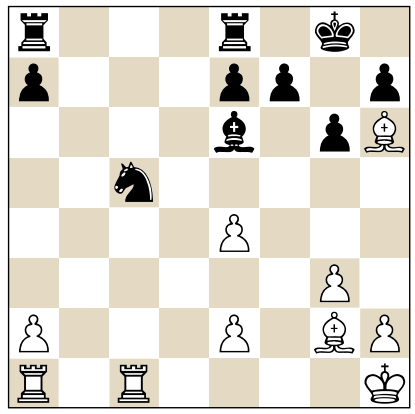
14...♘c6 15.fxe4
White's position does not look pretty, but Black will have to give away the b-pawn to solidly protect f7. Meanwhile, the number of choices Black has would make any impractical player spend too much time.

15...♗e6 16.♕xb7



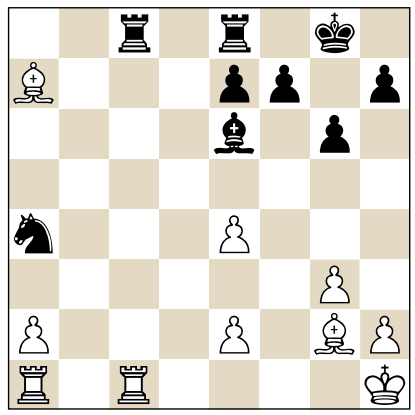
16...♕c5+?!
Black's first inaccuracy. After the natural 16...♘d4 17.♕a6 ♕h5 18.♗d2 ♖eb8 19.♗f3 ♕c5 20.♗e3 ♘xf3+ 21.♖xf3 ♕e5 he would have a nice and solid advantage.

17.♔h1 ♘a5 18.b4 ♘xb7 19.bxc5 ♘xc5 20.♖fc1



The position is now completely equal, but Black was down to 37 seconds against two minutes for White. Black is in trouble.

20...♖ac8 21.♗e3 ♘a4 22.♗xa7

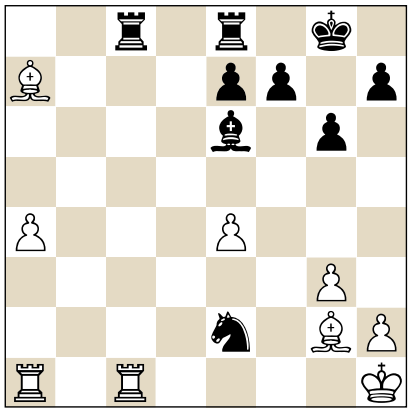


22...♘c3?
Considering the time deficit, a very impractical decision. When down on time, try to narrow the area where play will occur. You don't want to be calculating possible developments

‘When down on time, try to narrow the area where play will occur.’

on the entire board, since you are likely to miss something. Instead, after 22...♖xc1+ 23.♖xc1 ♗xa2 24.e5 ♗e6 25.♗d4 ♖b8 26.♔g1 ♘b6 27.♖b1 ♘d7, there is not much left to calculate.

23.a4! ♘xe2

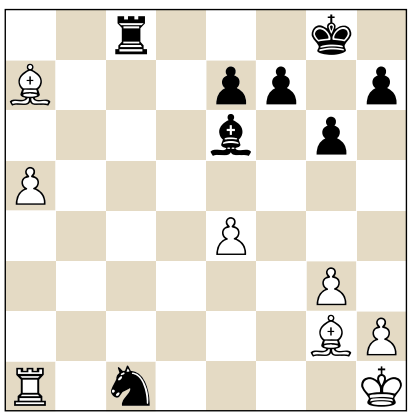


24.♖xc8

It’s interesting, but keeping both rooks would have given White more of an advantage. After 24.♖e1 ♗c4 25.♗f3 ♘c3 26.♖a3 Black’s pieces are not coordinating well.

24...♖xc8 25.a5 ♘c1?

This move loses, but Black was down to five seconds at this point. After 25...♗c4 26.♗f1 ♗d3 White’s advantage has yet to be proven.



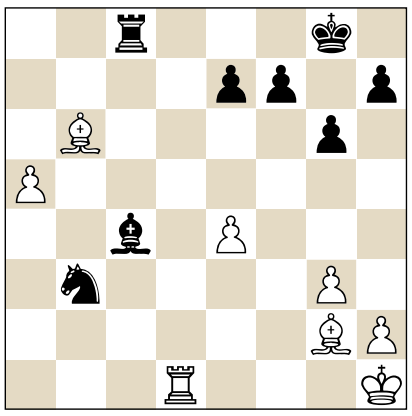
26.♗b6?

This was a moment for Vincent to appreciate that White’s first rank would actually be well protected by ♗g1.

After the immediate 26.a6 ♘b3 27.♖a3! ♖c1+ 28.♗g1! it’s finished. Details like this mean a lot in Blitz, since noticing them first can lead to a decisive advantage in a variation your opponent considers plausible. Vincent will eventually see this connection – and it will mean the game for him.

26...♘b3 27.♖d1 ♗c4

Now the pawn is blocked and White needs to unleash the potential of his bishops.



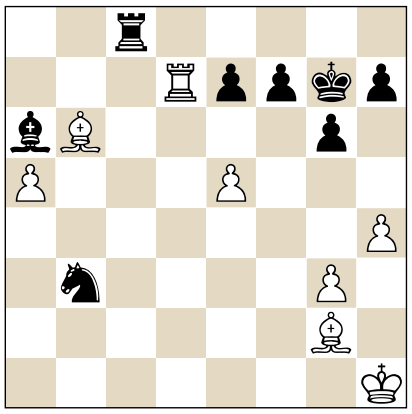
28.e5!

Played quickly and confidently. Black is playing with five seconds on his clock and can’t really function, except to play the most natural defensive moves.

28...♗a6 29.h4

It’s interesting that the immediate 29.♗f1 allows Black to hold on with a piece sac after 29...♘c5 30.♗xc5 ♖xc5 31.♗xa6 ♖xa5 32.♗f1 ♖xe5, and it’s doubtful if White will objectively be able to win this endgame.

29...♔g7 30.♖d7



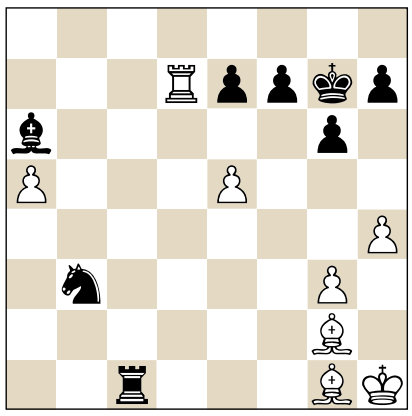
The strongest move. White needs more black weaknesses to make progress.

30...♖c1+ 31.♔h2 ♖c2 32.♔h1

A strange decision. It was natural to hide out on h3 for now. After 32.♔h3 Black has a difficult defensive task.

32...♖c1+ 33.♗g1

Finally noticing the connection. It was better to return the king to h3, but White sets a trap which costs Black his last thinking time. Dennis notices that 33...♘xa5 loses a piece to 34.♖a7 and plays the first aggressive move that comes to mind, which immediately loses.



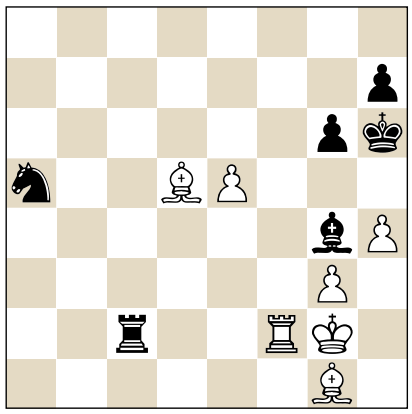
33...♗c8?

Black would be fine after 33...♗c4, which protects f7 and wins the a5-pawn. Now trouble city...

34.♖xe7 ♘xa5 35.♗d5 ♔h6

Nothing works now.

36.♖xf7 ♗g4 37.♔g2 ♖c2+ 38.♖f2



With the extra passed e-pawn, White will win handily after the rook trade.

38...♖c5 39.♖d2 ♘c4 40.♗xc5 ♘xd2 41.♗e3+ And Black resigned.

As you can see, confidence and speed are often the most important ingredients in a Blitz game – more so than pawns. ■

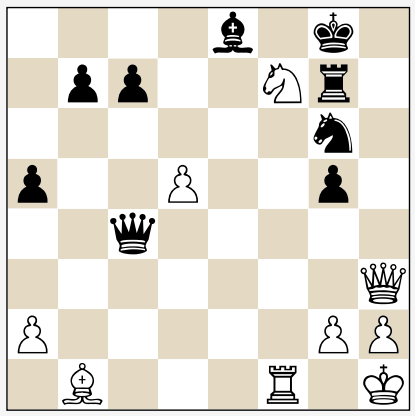
MAXIMize your Tactics

with Maxim Notkin

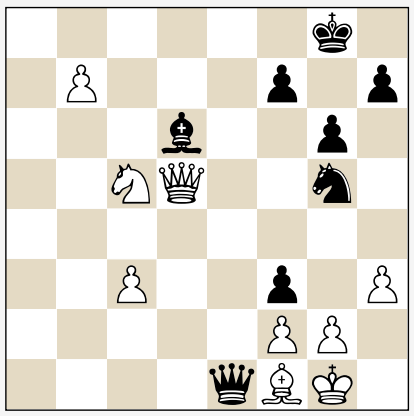
NEW IN CHESS * TRAINING *

Find the best move in the positions below

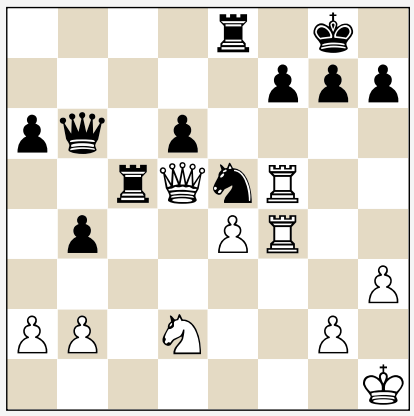
Solutions on page 99



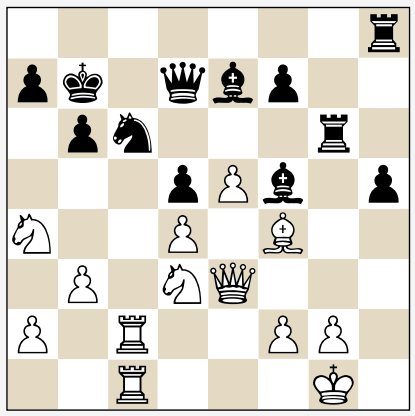
1. White to move



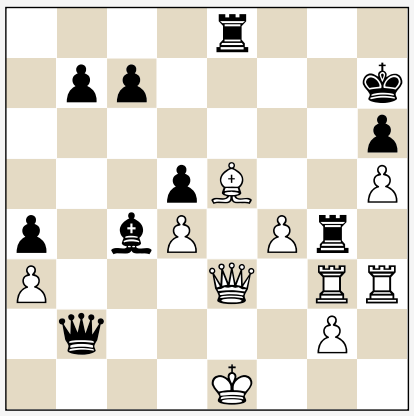
2. Black to move



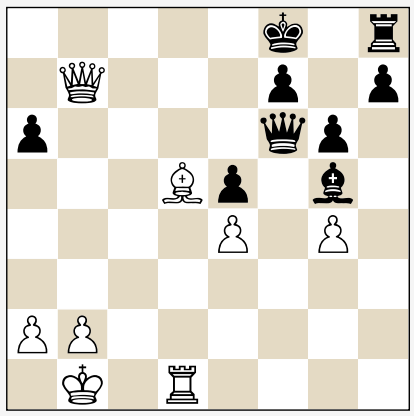
3. White to move



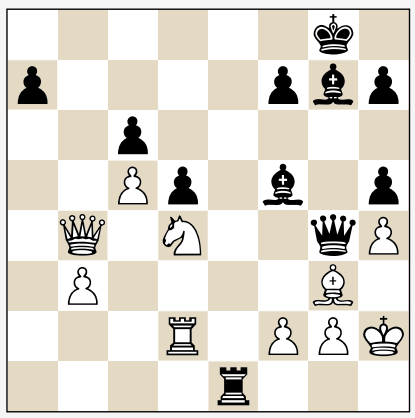
4. White to move



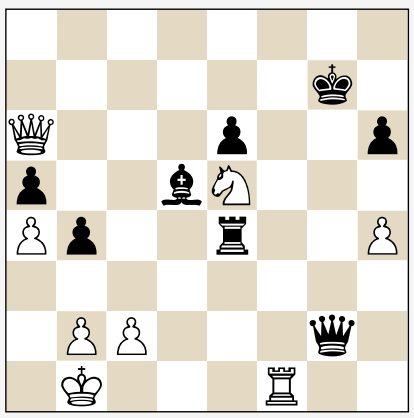
5. Black to move



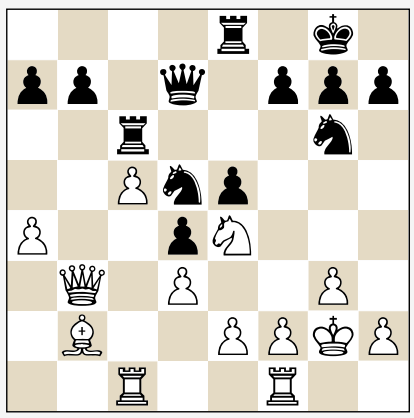
6. White to move



7. Black to move



8. Black to move



9. Black to move

Hans Ree

Into the lion's den

Carsten Hensel's German book *Wladimir Kramnik – Aus dem Leben eines Schachgenies* is a mixed bag. Algebraic notation is explained to beginners, the Catalan Opening and the dark schemes of FIDE to advanced readers, and when he mentions the proverbial one billion chess players on the planet, he seems to address himself to prospective sponsors. **HANS REE** would have preferred a more personal book, but Hensel certainly has some stories to tell.

The photo on the Russian website *chess-news.ru* quickly did the rounds on other sites. It was a scene of desolation. Vladimir Kramnik was slouched over the chess table, resting his head on his arms, his face hidden from view. On the board was the position from his fourth-round game in the Berlin Candidates after Fabiano Caruana's 80...♖xd1. Obviously Kramnik had just realized that he would have to resign in a few moves.

I was reminded of the last photograph of Alexander Alekhine in his hotel room in the Portuguese town of Estoril. There are some striking similarities and some differences, the main difference being that Alekhine was dead on that photo.

I don't like the hackneyed expression, but you might be forgiven to think that on that photo from Berlin part of Kramnik had just died.

He didn't lose courage, of course. On the contrary, in the next part of the tournament his play became wild, as if he didn't care whether he lost or drew. At the end, seven out of his fourteen games had been decisive. Such extreme aggression is not prudent. Berlin was a very combative tournament, but even there the general draw percentage was a more sober 65 percent.

Magical rituals

I would have liked to see Kramnik win the Candidates. Him or Aronian, but especially Kramnik. In a pre-tournament survey by the German monthly *Schach*, I was asked to indicate my favourite, but I didn't reply. Impolite, surely, but I was afraid that answering might bring bad luck. Whenever I express my preference for a political party, that party invariably suffers a severe defeat in the next election.

Do I really believe that this is because of me? Does an air passenger who carries an image of Saint Christopher, patron saint of travellers, really believe that the plane and all its passengers are dependent for their safety on the talisman he carries? Of course not. Magical rituals are for the good of one's inner self, and have no power to change the outside world. So I maintained my inner equilibrium by not replying to *Schach*, even though I couldn't influence the outside world. Both of my favourites did badly.

Lev Alburt has said that the older a player, the greater the odds that his idol is Emanuel Lasker, the man who could still compete with Botvinnik, Alekhine, Capablanca and Euwe in Nottingham at the age of 67.

Well said by Alburt. Kramnik was the oldest participant in the Berlin Candidates. Maybe because of my advanced age I love it when an older player refuses to retire to the well-deserved cultivation of his garden, but enters the battle again to relive his youth, even thinking sometimes that he will prove to the youngsters that he never really got older and is still the hero he once was.

Viktor Kortchnoi said that he would like to die at the chessboard. I do not share the old warrior's sentiment to never give up, but I can sympathize with it.

I realize that I am getting a bit carried away, bringing up Lasker and Kortchnoi. Compared to them, Kramnik and Aronian are mature youngsters.

Enough about age. I mainly wanted Kramnik to win because, like many others, I admire his style: like wide brush strokes on a canvas – a painter paints, he famously said – but without neglecting the details.

Turbulent times

Hensel's book starts with a quote from Kasparov: 'The most talented of all

players here is Vladimir Kramnik. All others make moves. Kramnik, however, plays chess.' I have so often quoted this statement through the years that it almost feels as if I came up with it myself.

It must be noted that this 'here' did not mean our planet, but the Dortmund Open of 1992, where Kramnik shared first place at the age of 16. Nor did Kasparov mean to say that the rest of the world did not really play chess; just that the young Kramnik belonged to the select few who did.

Kramnik's games are often stories that can be retold, with a beginning, a middle and an end following logically from what went before – very unlike a game by a computer, which hops from one position to another, happily oblivious of what had happened before.

Deep Thought was a highly inappropriate name for a chess program, but I think it would have been a good nickname for Kramnik.

Hensel was Kramnik's manager from early 2002 till the end of 2008. Since Kramnik was World Champion for most of that time, one might think that the job would be plain sailing, but that was not the case. This was a turbulent period in chess politics, replete with devious schemes and counter-schemes.

Just when you thought it was safe to bring your client to the chessboard, there was FIDE... Or, on the other side of the schism, the Einstein Group and Braingames Ltd. The pretentious names of these companies alone would lead you to infer that the English chess entrepreneur Raymond Keene was involved.

Shady characters

Hensel had had several functions in German sports when he came to chess in the 1990s, first only as a manager of Peter Leko and later also as manager of Kramnik. He found the chess players in general more interesting than the sportsmen he had known, but on the road he met many shady characters.

On the first page of the prologue to his book, Hensel describes the scene that must have been the most emotional one of the time he worked for Kramnik.

'Deep Thought was a highly inappropriate name for a chess program, but I think it would have been a good nickname for Kramnik.'

It was after the fourth and final tiebreak game of Kramnik's World Championship match against Veselin Topalov in Elista in 2006. This was the match in which Topalov's team created the infamous Toiletgate incident.

Topalov has just resigned. The members of Kramnik's team embrace. Hensel climbs the stage, shouts with joy and can't prevent himself from shaking his clenched fist towards Topalov's team. This was not the gentleman's way of handling victory, but Topalov and his manager Silvio Danailov had certainly deserved it.

Sometimes you would like his adversaries to be more sharply defined. Who are 'Kasparov's journalists'? I know of one, Mig Greengard, who is Kasparov's official ghost writer, but Hensel makes it appear without further elaboration that Kasparov's journalists were a gang that operated everywhere in the chess media.

Looking back to his time as a chess manager, Hensel feels that he was confronted with envious people, freeloaders, know-it-alls and swindlers. He met thousands of people, but in the end only a few that he could really trust.

There goes Azmai again

Not surprisingly, one of the clearly identified bad guys is FIDE's vice-president Zurab Azmaiparashvili. To the long list of Azmai's dubious exploits, Hensel adds a tale that I hadn't heard before. It happened during the World Championship tournament in Mexico City in 2007, which was won by Anand. Apparently, a chambermaid at the Sheraton Hotel had accused Azmai of sexual harassment. Azmai was thrown out of the hotel as a paying guest, but since the hotel was also the tournament venue and because Azmai had some official functions, he was allowed to walk to the playing area, but only along a strictly defined path.

At the time, not much publicity was given to this incident, in accordance with the maxim that what happens in FIDE, stays in FIDE.

Confronting a lion

In the course of his chess odyssey, Hensel twice found himself in mortal danger. In 1996, at the end of a flight with Armenian Airlines from the Olympiad in Yerevan to Amsterdam, the plane's landing gear malfunctioned during its descent to Schiphol Airport. Some Armenians started praying, some women screamed and the faces of the air hostesses turned chalk-white. This must have been frightening, but as in most cases, some ingenious manoeuvring on the part of the pilots saw them landed safely.

Hensel's next encounter with death was more out of the ordinary.

He arrived in Nanjing in 2009 for the Pearl Spring tournament that would be won by Magnus Carlsen, and after a sleepless night due to jetlag he went for a walk in a park near his hotel at 6.00 in the morning. Hysterical cries of the Chinese women doing their morning exercises made him run along a fence until he was suddenly confronted by a roaring circus lion that was walking around freely. Again, he remained unharmed.

Not plain sailing indeed. But Kramnik, Leko and Anand were always civilized and Hensel's trials and tribulations were for a good cause. At some point, he estimates that in the 25 years of his professional career Kramnik earned between 15 and 20 million dollars. Quite satisfying, especially if done by playing beautiful chess games. ■

Carsten Hensel: Wladimir Kramnik, Aus dem Leben eines Schachgenies, Verlag Die Werkstatt, 2018

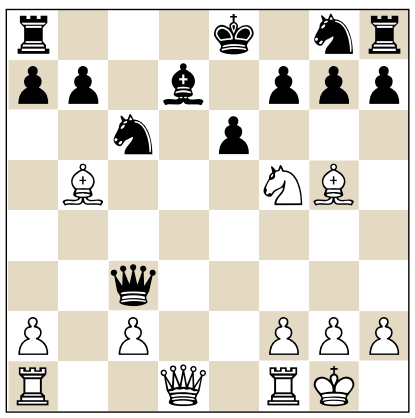
Sadler on Books

Total Tal

Mikhail Tal is rightly famous for his brilliant attacks. But what about the weird and wonderful endgames that arose as a result of his sacrifices? **MATTHEW SADLER** thoroughly enjoyed Tal's three-volume games collection by Tibor Karolyi. And these weren't the only thought-provoking books he read!

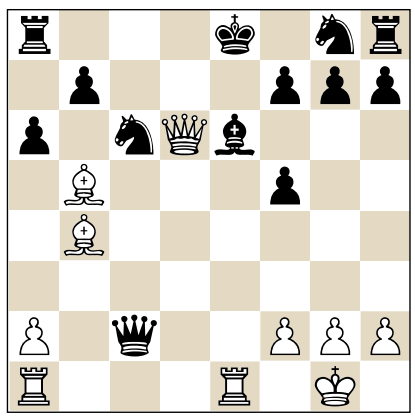
Exhausted from work, and bored with life in general, I decided to sit down for a few hours and lose myself in a good book. Glancing at my bookcases, my eye fell on New In Chess' *The Complete Manual of Positional Chess, Opening and Middlegame* by Sakaev and Landa (well you didn't think I was going to read a real book, did you?) and I started to flick through the pages. I didn't get very far because the very first position was enough to bring a smile to my face and spark some life.

Mikhail Tal
Wolfgang Uhlmann
Moscow 1971 (6)



position after 12.♘f5

12...exf5 13.♖e1+ ♗e6 14.♕d6 a6 15.♗d2! ♕xc2 16.♗b4



16...axb5 17.♕f8+ ♔d7 18.♖ed1+ ♔c7 19.♕xa8 1-0

That switchback with 15.♗d2 and 16.♗b4! Such amazing vision to spot that the bishop on g5 was not on its best square, bearing in mind that the concept had to be spotted before playing 12.♘f5.

I wasn't particularly convinced by the notes to the game and decided to compare them with some more sources. Tal's own notes in *The Life and Games of Mikhail Tal* (Everyman Chess) are entertaining as always but didn't answer my questions either.

Searching for more Tal books, I ended up with *Mikhail Tal's Best Games: 1949-1959 The Magic of Youth* and *Mikhail Tal's Best Games: 1972-1992 The Invincible* in my hands. Slightly frustrating while looking for a game played in 1971, but the frustration was soon forgotten as I got sucked into the astonishing chess in these pages.

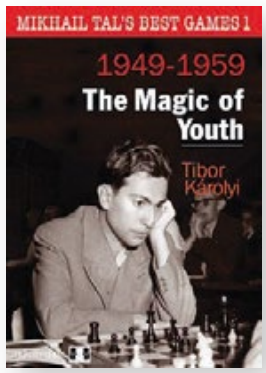
In three volumes, each of about 500 pages, Tibor Karolyi – a well-known IM, author and trainer from Hungary and (major claim to fame!) one of the first IMs I drew with at the age of 12 – takes us in chronological order (each year in Tal's chess career is given a separate chapter) through Tal's career, starting in 1949 as a mere 12-year old to his final classical game in 1992 in which he defeated Akopian in excellent style.

From a presentational point of view, there are some nice touches: Tal's Elo rating and world ranking is given next to each year, and each chapter concludes with a statistical summary of that year, giving win-loss-draw percentages and tournament results. For each opponent of Tal's, Karolyi also gives that player's results against World Champions, which leads to some interesting quiz facts. For example, I've seen a number of fine games in the 1950's by Lev Aronin although I know very little about him. Karolyi calculates that of 27 games against World Champions, Aronin won 5, drew 14 and lost 8, including good records against Petrosian (3 wins, 3 draws and no losses) and Tal. A fantastic record for a 'minor' player and a testament of exceptional ability to be able to handle such opposites as Tal and Petrosian with such success!

Another nice touch is that Karolyi has asked many of Tal's opponents about the games they played with Tal and their impressions of Tal, which adds an extra human dimension to the book.

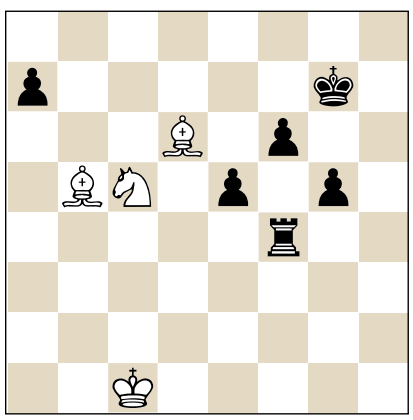
But of course, the most important thing about all these books are the games and the analysis and for both I have only the fullest admiration. Perhaps the most impressive thing about Karolyi's annotations is that he doesn't only focus on bril-

Mikhail Tal's Best Games: 1949-1959 The Magic of Youth by Tibor Karolyi Quality Chess, 2017
★★★★★



liant Tal attacks, but also spends a lot of time on many of the weird and wonderful endgames that arose in his games as a result of his sacrifices. The amazing knight and 2 bishops against rook and 4 pawns endgame against Gipslis in the 1955 Soviet Championship is one such example:

Mikhail Tal
Aivars Gipslis
Riga 1955 (9)

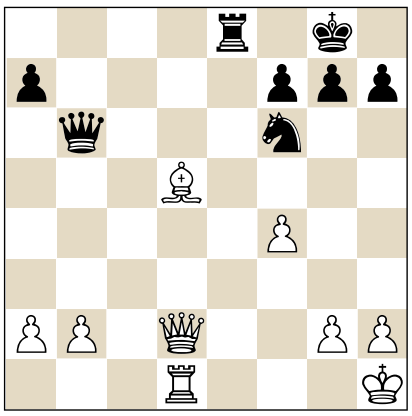


position after 34.♘xc5

Karolyi dedicates 5 pages to this endgame, in which Tal, within 15 moves of the diagrammed position, had launched a kingside attack and won all of Black's pawns!: **34...♖f2 35.♘e4 ♖f3 36.♔d2 ♔g6 37.♔e2 ♖b3 38.♗d3 ♖b2+ 39.♔e3 ♔f7 40.♗c4+ ♔g6 41.♗e7 ♖b6 42.♘d6 a5 43.♗d3+ ♔g7 44.♔e4 a4 45.♔f5 a3 46.♗c4 g4 47.♘e8+ ♔h6 48.♘xf6 ♔g7 49.♘xg4 ♖c6 50.♘xe5** 1-0.

Another amazing endgame from the same year played at the Soviet Team Championships is also well worth playing through. The White player was Alexander Arulaid, who drew another wild game against Tal in the Russian Championship Quarterfinal, also in 1955.

Alexander Arulaid
Mikhail Tal
Lugansk 1955 (6)

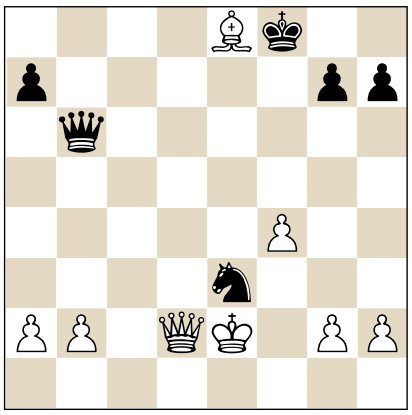


position after 24.♔h1

Taking on d5 and then on b2 would be a sure path to equality for Black. Tal thought up something much wilder.
24...♘g4 25.♗xf7+ ♔f8

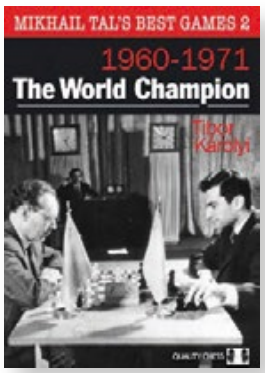
'Within 15 moves from the diagram, Tal had launched a kingside attack and won all of Black's pawns!'

25...♔xf7 26.♕d7+ wins the piece back with advantage.
26.♗xe8 ♘f2+ 27.♔g1 ♘xd1+ 28.♔f1 ♘e3+ 29.♔e2

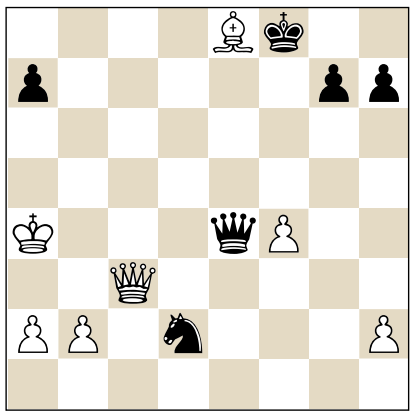


I find it hard to believe that Black can get his knight out of trouble with tempo in order to take the White bishop. I wonder how far Tal saw when playing

Mikhail Tal's Best Games: 1960-1971 World Champion by Tibor Karolyi Quality Chess, 2017
★★★★★



24...♘g4, because the risk of a miscalculation is very high, and the correct path is exceedingly narrow!
29...♘c4 30.♕c3
30.♕d5 was a better try according to Karolyi, but even here he finds promising play for Black: 30...♕e3+ 31.♔d1 ♕xf4 32.♕d8 ♕f1+ 33.♔c2 ♘e3+ 34.♔c3 ♕c1+ 35.♔b4 ♕xb2+ 36.♔a4 ♕xa2+ 37.♔b5 ♕c4+ 38.♔a5 ♕d5+ 39.♕xd5 ♘xd5 40.♗c6 ♘c7 with an ending Karolyi considers winning for Black. Amazing coordination by the queen and knight!
30...♕e6+ 31.♔d3 ♕d5+ 32.♔c2 ♕xg2+ 32...♔xe8 33.♕xg7 ♕xg2+ 34.♕xg2 ♘e3+ 35.♔d3 ♘xg2 36.♔e4 would give White drawing chances according to Karolyi.
33.♔b3 ♘d2+ 34.♔a4 ♕e4+

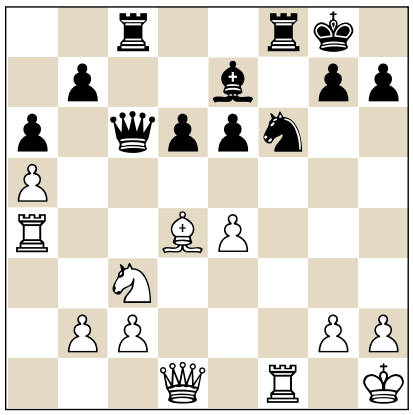


Fantastic accuracy from Tal all the way through this endgame.
35.♔b5 Or 35.♔a5 ♘c4+ 36.♔a6 ♕e6+ 37.♔xa7 ♕b6+ 38.♔a8 ♕c7 and wins! A wonderful mating picture!
35...♕xe8+ 36.♔a6 ♕a4+ 37.♔b7 ♘c4 38.♕d3 ♕b5+ 39.♔xa7 ♕b6+ 40.♔a8 ♕c6+ 41.♔b8 ♘d6
This calm move tightens the noose around White's king.

42.♕b3 ♕c8+ 43.♔a7 ♕c7+ 44.♔a6 ♕c6+ 45.♕b6 ♕c4+ 0-1

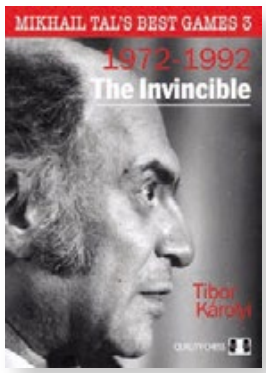
However, perhaps the most impressive part of the series from a playing point of view was the last part, covering the years 1972-1992. The quality and breadth of skill displayed in those years – smooth positional wins, grinding endgames, sudden sacrificial attacks and even some irrational positions with unbalanced material – is astonishing. I've had a wonderful time playing through many of these games. One of my favourites was Tal's game as Black against Unzicker in Tallinn 1977. It's one of those games in which every move Tal made was just a bit better than Unzicker's. Tal cuts through White's solid-looking position with inexorable power and precision.

Wolfgang Unzicker
Mikhail Tal
Tallinn 1977 (14)
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗e2 e5 7.♘b3 ♗e7 8.0-0 ♗e6 9.f4 ♕c7 10.a4 ♘bd7 11.♗e3 0-0 12.♔h1 exf4 13.♖xf4 ♘e5 14.a5 ♖ac8 15.♘d4 ♖fe8 16.♖f1 ♘c4 17.♘xe6 fxe6 18.♗xc4 ♕xc4 19.♗d4 ♖f8 20.♖a4 ♕c6

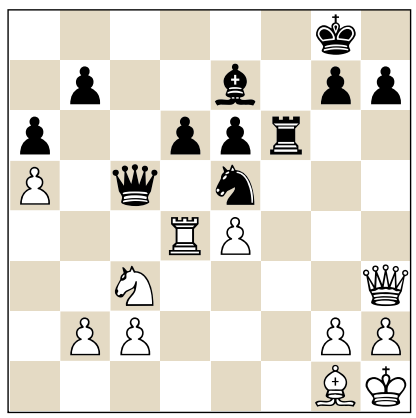


A typical Najdorf Sicilian position has been reached in which Black is normally slightly happier than White. White's pawn structure is weaker and his position feels a touch overextended while it's hard to see anything terrible happening to Black's compact

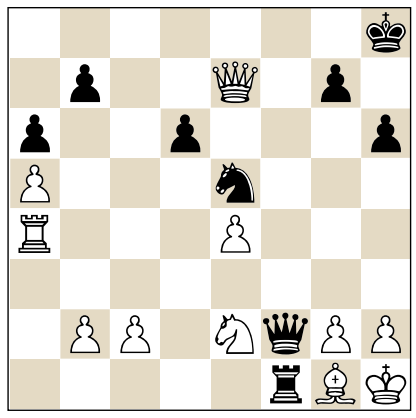
Mikhail Tal's Best Games: 1972-1992 The Invincible by Tibor Karolyi Quality Chess, 2017
★★★★★



position. From now on, Tal relentlessly increases his advantage.
21.♕d3 ♘g4 22.♖aa1 ♘e5 23.♕h3 ♖xf1+ 24.♖xf1 ♕c4
Covering e6, while attacking the rook on f1 and bishop on d4.
25.♖d1 ♖f8 Taking control of the f-file.
26.♗g1 ♖f6 Karolyi highlights this excellent move, freeing the queen by protecting e6 while thinking about ...♖h6 to harass the White queen.
27.♖d4 ♕c5



Two exclamation marks from Karolyi! It's a really good move, attacking a5 while not fearing any discovered attack by the White rook. It also prepares the game combination.
28.♖a4 ♖f1 29.♕xe6+ ♔h8 30.♘e2 ♕f2 Karolyi notes that Tal thought that Unzicker had missed this move. I'm not surprised! **31.♕xe7 h6**



Black is a piece down with no immediate threats of mate, but White's coordination is too poor to give any hope.
32.♕xd6 As 32.♕e8+ ♔h7 33.♕h5 g6 was Tal's intention! **32...♕xe2 33.♕c5 ♘g4** White resigned because 34.h3 ♘e3 wins. A great game!

To complete my set, I bought the second volume (*Mikhail Tal's Best Games: 1960-1971 World Champion*) as a digital book using the Forward Chess App. Many different chess publishers offer their books in electronic versions in this way and I'm impressed. The layout is clean and easy to read and the inline board – with engine analysis – to play through variations while reading the text works very well indeed. I read the book on my iPhone with great pleasure.

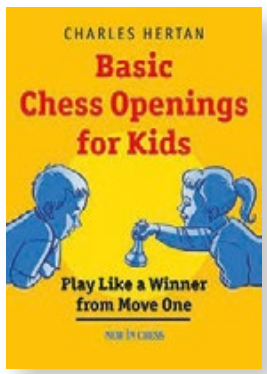
Time to round off this review I guess. It feels a little bit like overdoing things to give 5 stars to a set of three books, but if any Best Games collection has ever deserved it, then this one has! Don't waste any time: get down to the bookshop and enjoy!

■ ■ ■

I have it in my head that Tal once wrote that he enjoyed reading chess books for beginners because he always learnt something, but I can't find that quote anywhere. In any case, I thought I might give that a go by reading through *Basic Chess Openings for Kids – Play like a Winner from Move One* by Charles Hertan (New In Chess). The title seemed promising – I want to play like that too! The book is aimed at kids who have learnt the rules and want to know how to start the game. The book starts off by explaining how to handle each of the pieces – although strangely there is no specific chapter on the pawn – then presents some basic openings before ending with *The Five Biggest Mistakes Kids Make in the Opening*.

I enjoyed the chapters on the pieces a great deal – I thought these were excellent introductory chapters for

Basic Chess Openings for Kids – Play Like a Winner from Move One
by Charles Hertan
New In Chess, 2015
★★★☆☆



any player starting on the game. I was less keen on the chapters on openings, although I'm sure I wouldn't know better which openings a kid should be taught to start with. I started off my career with all manner of gambits (Morra Gambit, Göring Gambit) and that seemed to work out fine. I do still remember though the shock one day of seeing my early attack neutralised and suddenly realising that I was a pawn down! I'd won so many quick games against other juniors, I'd never really got to the stage of worrying about lost material before!

The openings proposed by Hertan seem a strange mix – the Torre Attack, an Italian Game with an early ♗e3 – and perhaps somewhat White-centric (I wasn't too sure what was being recommended as Black). There is also the enormous sin of calling 1.g4 'the Spike', which Michael Basman would certainly not agree with! That said, I spent an enjoyable hour reading through the book and I'm sure kids would too!

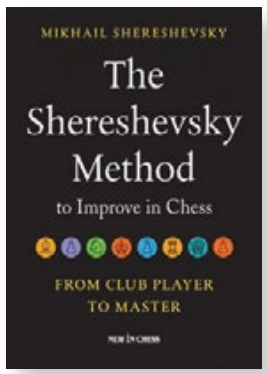
■ ■ ■

Now on to some serious training: *The Shereshevsky Method* by Mikhail Shereshevsky (New In Chess). Born in 1950, Mikhail Shereshevsky is a Russian trainer who is perhaps best known in the West for his fantastic endgame book *Endgame Strategy*. It stood out amongst the dry and complicated works available up until then (such as the 5-volume Averbakh series), providing guidance not on which endings were winning, but how to play the endgame. His memorable chapter 'Do not Hurry' (also present in this book) was a wonderful introduction to developing a good rhythm for converting superior endings into a win.

This book is a slightly strange one as it is comprised of three distinct parts. The first part is an extract from Shereshevsky's 1992 work *The Soviet Chess Conveyor* (unknown to me), which deals with the creation of an opening repertoire. The second part is a concentrated and revised version of *Endgame Strategy*. The final part is a free-format exposition of the author's thoughts about a wide range of chess topics, such as the correct method of calculating variations at the board to the current state of Russian chess.

To start with, perhaps a small warning is due. The book is subtitled 'From Club Player to Master', which implies to me something like a structured training method to improve your game. However, this really isn't the sort of book that you would study one lesson at a time, steadily improving your game. It's more the sort of book you would read for a couple of hours on a quiet evening, music in the background, glass of wine next to you and let the author's always thought-provoking ideas wash over you. At the end of it, you would have a much better overall idea of what chess is and how you should think, though you might not be able to point to specific chess lessons you have learnt.

The Shereshevsky Method
by Mikhail Shereshevsky
New In Chess, 2018
★★★★☆



'It's not the type of writing that you can read in a hurry, but there is wit, humour and insight to make it worthwhile and memorable.'

I really loved it, in the same way I loved *Endgame Strategy*. My favourite part of the book is – funnily enough – the 'book review' section, in which Shereshevsky considers the optimal way to calculate variations, drawing heavily on works by Kotov (*Think like a Grandmaster*), Nunn (*Secrets of Practical Chess*), Beim (*How to calculate chess tactics*), Dorfman (*The Method in Chess*) and Krasenkow (an article entitled 'Wandering in the Wilds'). This section takes up six chapters and is

Spring 2018

Neumann, Hirschfeld and Suhle

19th Century Berlin Chess Biographies with 711 Games

HANS RENETTE *AND* FABRIZIO ZAVATARELLI

$75 library binding (21.9 × 28.5 cm), 384pp., 66 photographs, appendices, many notes, bibliography, indexes
978-1-4766-7379-0, ebook 978-1-4766-3385-5

Around 1860 a wave of young Berliners, including Berthold Suhle, Philipp Hirschfeld and Gustav Neumann, came to rank among the world's best. Suhle became an authority on ancient Greek; Hirschfeld, a successful businessman (and Zukertort sparring partner), and Neumann, one of the world's strongest players. Little has heretofore been written about their lives (richly revealed) and games (analyzed in detail).

McFarland & Company, Inc., Publishers

a wonderful exposition of the subject, taking you step-by-step through all the authors' recommendations, questioning some and praising others. It's not the type of writing that you can read in a hurry and get quick practical answers from, but there is wit, humour and insight to make it worthwhile and memorable.

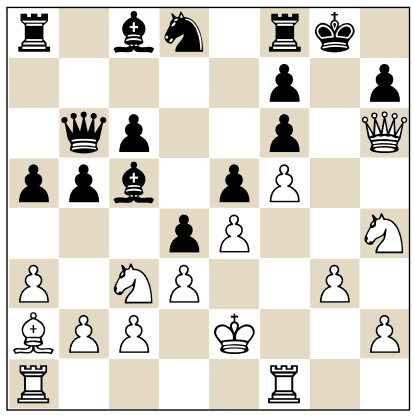
I can't really do the whole exposition justice in a couple of paragraphs, but I will highlight some points that interested me. Firstly, Krasenkow suggests that you should start your thinking by formulating a goal for your calculations, that is 'the criterion by which we will evaluate the calculated variations and decide whether they satisfy us or not. This can be the achievement of a decisive material advantage, equalising, putting up resistance in a bad position etc... The goal should be real, that is based on an assessment of the position and intuitive considerations.' Shereshevsky calls this 'a logical analysis of the position prior to the calculation of variations'. I liked this idea greatly as a way of instilling purpose in your thinking and eliminating the headless-chicken calculation in which you calculate masses of variations without getting any closer to a conclusion.

How do you decide which lines to consider and in which order to calculate them? Shereshevsky quotes John Nunn, who states 'Usually, I prefer a "quick scan": I briefly study all the important options to determine which of them can be quickly calculated. If you are lucky, this will be enough for the successful completion of your analysis; if not, then at least you will find out where the most confusing part is.'

Shereshevsky also makes the point that 'a player should calculate variations at every move, whereas a deep penetration into the logic of the position is only required periodically, at key turning points in the game, what players refer to as "critical moments"'. To be honest, that last comment is precisely the opposite to my ideal. I think that continuous reasoning and minimal calculation (or rather, calculation of only the bare essentials) are the best way to maintain the unity of purpose that generates real power in your play, whereas continuous calculation confuses and distracts. However, hearing an opposite view formulated so well is an excellent stimulus for thinking about your own views!

Another point made very cogently by Shereshevsky (again quoting Krasenkow and Nunn) is that some 'candidate moves' (Kotov's term for the complete list of possible ideas you should draw up before calculation) can only be found after initial calculation has been performed. Krasenkow takes this game as an example:

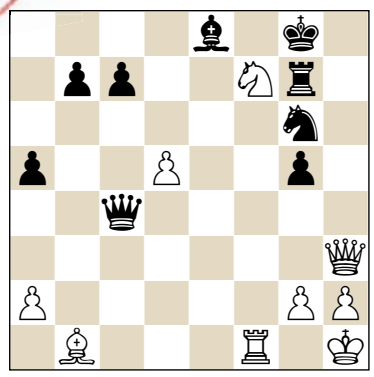
C.H.O'D Alexander
E.T. Marshall
Cambridge 1928



Krasenkow points out that it is only after analysing the move 1.♖f4 exf4 2.gxf4 dxc3 (when the bishop on c5 covers g1) that you can spot that 1.♘a4 is the best first move, when after 1...bxa4 2.♖f4 exf4 3.gxf4, Black cannot stop the decisive ♖g1+.
You would be crazy (or a computer) to consider 1.♘a4 as a candidate move without this prior analysis.

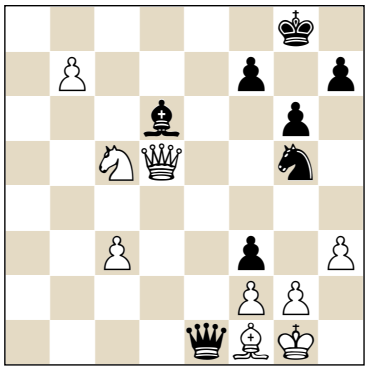
Beim coined the phrase 'resulting moves' to describe this phenomenon where 'the idea of a move appears only as a consequence of more natural candidate moves'. I liked this clear explanation very much and vowed never to feel guilty about never drawing up a list of candidate moves! All in all, a book that demands a little more mental effort from the reader, but one that is well worth it! ■

MAXIMize your Tactics Solutions



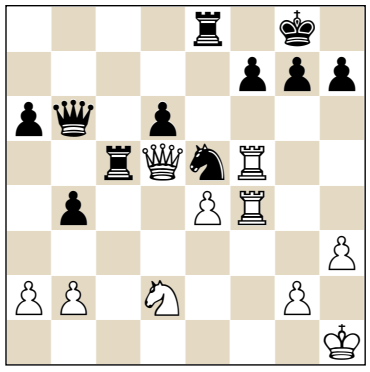
1. Matlakov-Nabaty
Batumi 2018

40.♕h8+! Black resigned in view of 40...♘xh8 41.♘h6 mate.



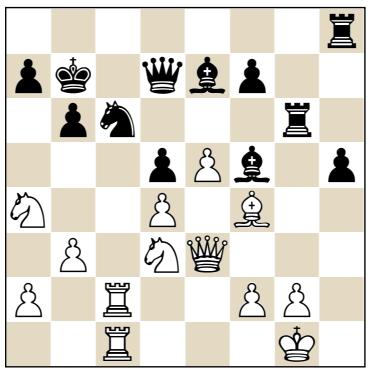
2. Alekseev-Mamedov
Batumi 2018

White has it all covered, doesn't he? **36...♘xh3+!** White resigned as 37.gxh3 ♗h2+! 38.♔xh2 ♕xf2+ 39.♔h1 ♕xf1+ 40.♔h2 ♕g2 is mate.



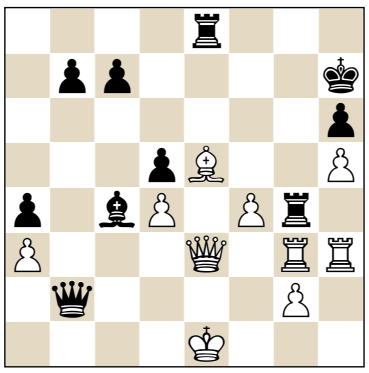
3. Worek-Dzagnidze
Vysoke Tatry 2018

White didn't grab her chance to upset last year's champion by **29.♖xe5!** with the beautiful point **29...♖f8 30.♕xf7+! ♖xf7 31.♖e8+** mating.



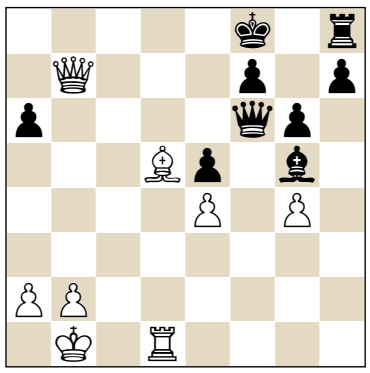
4. Bernadskiy-Pourramezanali
Bandar-e Anzali 2018

26.e6! Opening lines! **26...♖xe6** 26...♕xe6 27.♖xc6 ♕xe3 loses to 28.♖c7+. **27.♖xc6 ♖xc6 28.♖xc6 ♕xc6** 28...♔xc6 29.♘e5+ is even worse. **29.♕xe7+ ♔a8 30.♕e5** Black resigned.



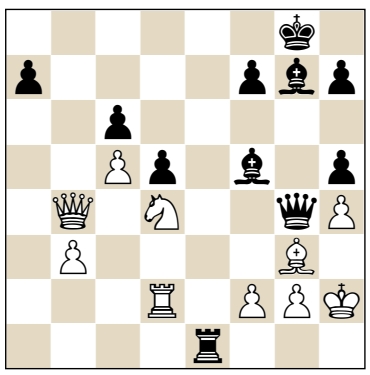
5. Johansson-Lyrberg
Sweden 2018

33...♖xe5! 34.dxe5 34.♕xe5 runs into mate by 34...♕c1+ while 34.fxe5 ♖e4 loses the queen. **34...♖xf4!** Threatening 35...♖f1 mate, and after 35.♖g7+ ♔xg7 36.♕g3+ ♔h8 there is no perpetual. White resigned.



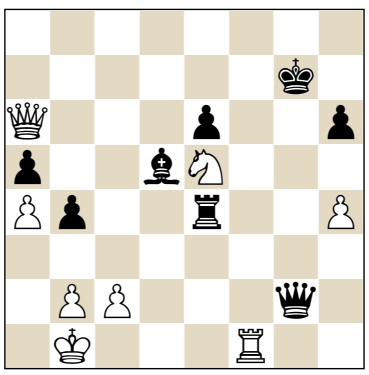
6. Paramzina-Gomes
Moscow 2018

34.♗c4! ♔g7 Or 34...h5 35.♖d7 ♖h7 36.♕c8+ ♔g7 37.♖xf7+. **35.♖f1** Not the 'smart' 35.♗xf7? ♖d8. **35...♗f4 36.g5!** But this is smart. Black resigned in view of 36...♕xg5 37.♕xf7+ ♔h6 38.♖h1+.



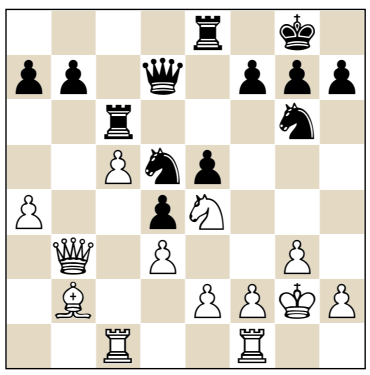
7. Xu Xianliang-Rasmussen
Denmark 2018

36...♗e5 37.♘xc6 With the idea 37...♕xb4 38.♘xb4 ♗c3 39.♖xd5. **37...♗e4!** Renewing the threat. **38.♘xe5 ♖h1+!** White resigned. His bulk of extra material is of no use as he is checkmated after 39.♔xh1 ♕h3+ 40.♔g1 ♕xg2.



8. Vallejo-Bosiocic
Batumi 2018

43...♕f2! 43...♖xe5 44.♕a7+! ♗b7 45.♖g1. **44.♘f3** 44.b3 ♖e1+ 45.♖xe1 ♕xe1+ 46.♔a2 ♕xe5 poses no problems. **44...♕xf3 45.b3 ♕e3!** The only winning move, and the only one that doesn't lose! After **46.♕xa5** Black converted his advantage.



9. Shetty-Izoria
Internet 2018

21...♘gf4+! 22.gxf4 ♘xf4+ 23.♔h1 ♖h6 Creating the threat of 24...♖xh2+!, forcing mate. **24.♘g5 ♕c6+! 25.f3** Or 25.♘e4 ♕g6 26.♘g3 (26.♖g1 ♖xh2+) 26...♕g4. **25...♖xh2+! 26.♔xh2 ♕h6+** White resigned as it's mate in three.

Jan Timman

No Moro Magic in Malmö

His participation was eagerly anticipated, but Alexander Morozevich seemed to lack inspiration in the TePe Sigeman tournament. The youngsters were more ambitious. According to **JAN TIMMAN** first place was rightly shared by Vidit Gujrathi and Nils Grandelius.

Four years ago, Johan Sigeman announced the discouraging news that the tournament named after him would be staged for the last time, thereby seemingly putting an end to a 21-year-old tradition. I remember vividly how stunned I was: there is already such a scarcity of tournaments with mixed fields these days. Of top tournaments there is no shortage, but these are often marred by a relatively large number of lifeless draws. In Malmö – as in Wijk aan Zee – they invariably managed to assemble the kind of field that guaranteed fighting chess. Fortunately, the tradition was reinstated last year when a co-sponsor was found: TePe.

In his novel *De Pupil* (The Pupil), the Dutch writer Harry Mulisch introduces a character who has become mega-wealthy through the invention of the safety pin. In a similar vein, the Swedish wood engraver Henning Eklund succeeded in designing a triangular toothpick in 1965 – which was the genesis of TePe, the biggest manufacturer of dental care products in Sweden. It is still a family business, and it exports its products to 60 countries worldwide.

Last year's event featured strong, creative veterans, with Eljanov, Jobava and Short participating. This year, the organizers opted for youngsters, with only one creative veteran in the line-up: Alexander Morozevich. The Russian would have to enter the ring against Vidit Gujrathi – the recent winner of the Challengers in Wijk aan Zee –, Junior World Champion Aryan Tari and Benjamin Gledura, who made headlines three years ago by beating Karpov in a short rapid match. On the Swedish side, we had Nils Grandelius, who shared victory with Jobava last year, and the as yet little known Linus Johansson.

Prior to the tournament, its website published a number of short interviews. Vidit and Grandelius were hoping to win the tournament. Three other participants were also optimistic about their chances. Only Morozevich confessed to harbouring no ambitions at all. He had stopped playing competitively three years ago, and all he cared for these days was being a good trainer for his students. He seemed to lack inspiration during the tournament, failing to win a single game. He was, however, spotted at a Go board in the hotel lobby, playing against Tiger Hillarp Persson, whom he had already beaten in a game of Go in 2016.

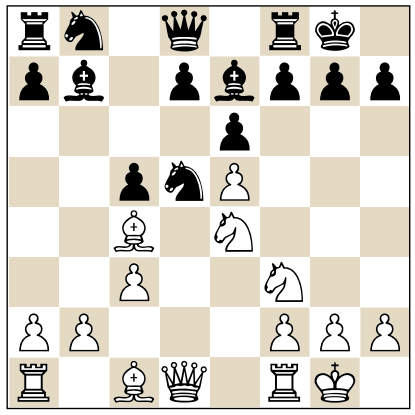
'Only Morozevich confessed to harbouring no ambitions at all.'

Morozevich's uninspired performance had a dampening effect on the fighting spirit in the tournament, but Grandelius, for one, didn't seem to be affected. He started off with a quick win.

Nils Grandelius
Benjamin Gledura
Malmö 2018 (1)
Sicilian Defence, Alapin Variation

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.c3 ♘f6 4.e5 ♘d5 5.♗c4 b6 A move introduced by Jansa that never became very popular. Yet it is not a bad plan.

6.d4 ♗b7 7.0-0 ♗e7 8.dxc5
Probably the best option. White fixes the central structure with the intention of centralizing his queen's knight.
8...bxc5 9.♘bd2 Another plan was 9.♖e1 0-0 10.♘a3, but then Black has the freeing move 10...d6.
9...0-0 10.♘e4



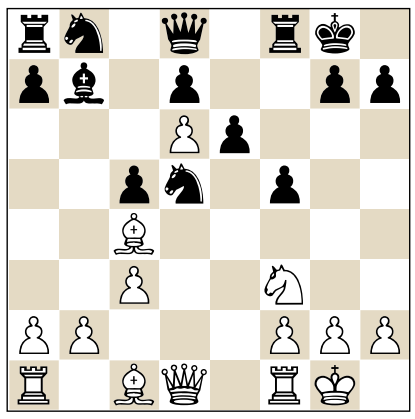
10...f5 It would have been more accurate to prepare this advance with 10...♕c7, when White has the following possibilities:

A) 11.♖e1 ♘c6 12.♗g5 f6! (less good is 12...h6 13.♗xd5 exd5 14.♗xe7 ♘xe7 15.♘d6, and White is better), and Black has good chances to equalize;

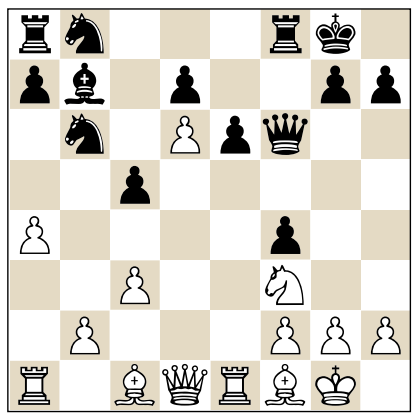
B) 11.♗e2 (in order for the knight to jump to d6 regardless) 11...f5 12.♘d6 ♗xd6 13.exd6 ♕b6, with equal chances;

C) 11.♗g5 ♗xg5 12.♘exg5 f6 13.exf6 gxf6, and Black has just sufficient counterplay.

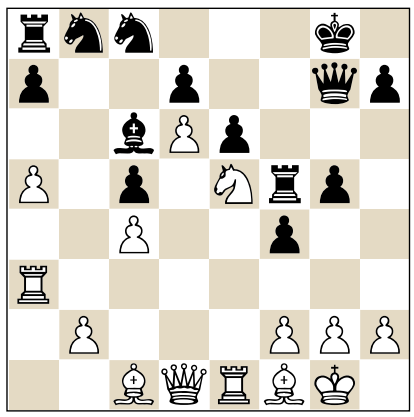
11.♘d6! Given the circumstances, this knight jump yields White strong pressure. **11...♗xd6 12.exd6**



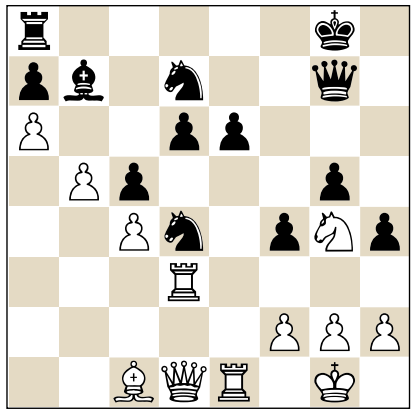
12...♕f6 The wrong direction. Commentators Seirawan and Hellers had already established that Black would have been better advised to target the white d-pawn with 12...♕b6. But the situation now is less favourable for Black than after his 10th move in Variation B, since the bishop on c4 is very active. With 13.♕b3 ♘f6 14.♘e5 ♗d5 15.♗g5! White can maintain the pressure on the enemy position.
13.♖e1 ♘b6 14.♗f1 f4 15.a4



15...♗d5 This yields too much terrain. Black should have gone 15...a5, although White retains his advantage with 16.♗d3.
16.a5 ♘c8 17.♖a4
And Black is obliterated.
17...g5 18.♘e5 ♕g7 19.c4 ♗c6 20.♖a3 ♖f5



21.♘g4! Elegant play.
21...h5 22.♗d3 The point of the previous move. The rook must not retreat, because this would allow the white knight to stage a very strong return to e5. **22...♘xd6 23.♗xf5 ♘xf5 24.♘e5 h4 25.♖d3 ♘d4 26.b4 d6 27.♘g4 ♘d7 28.b5 ♗b7 29.a6**



LARS OA HEDLUND

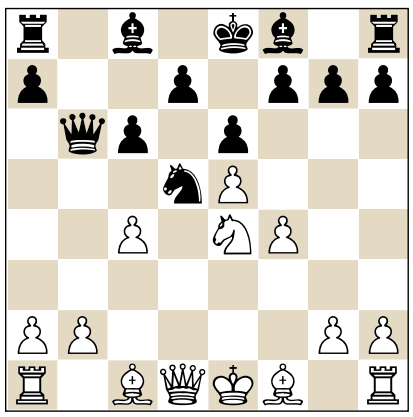
Alexander Morozevich said that he stopped playing professionally three years ago. Despite his new Wyatt Earp look, the Russian failed to impress in Malmö.

Black is hemmed in more and more. The final phase needs no comment.
29...♗c8 30.♖xd4 cxd4 31.♖xe6 ♘e5 32.♘f6+ ♔f7 33.♖xd6 ♗e6 34.♘e4 ♘xc4 35.♖xd4 ♖c8 36.♖d7+
Black resigned.

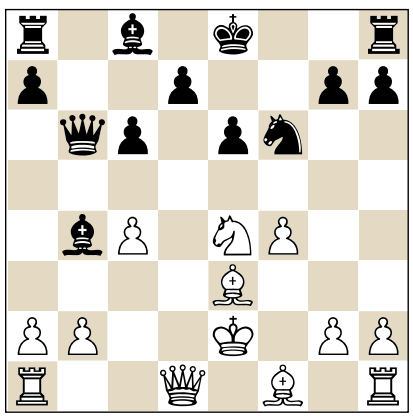
Meanwhile, Vidit, as Black, had played an interesting draw against Tari.

Aryan Tari
Vidit Gujrathi
Malmö 2018 (1)
Sicilian Defence, Four Knights Variation

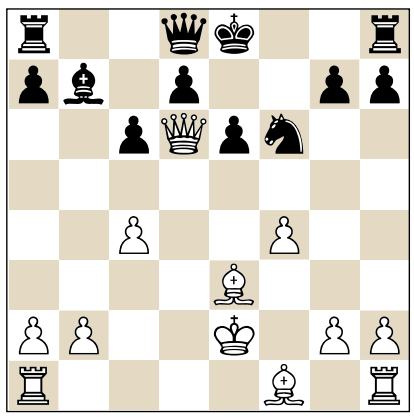
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 ♘c6 6.♘xc6 bxc6 7.e5 ♘d5 8.♘e4 ♕c7 9.f4 ♕b6 10.c4



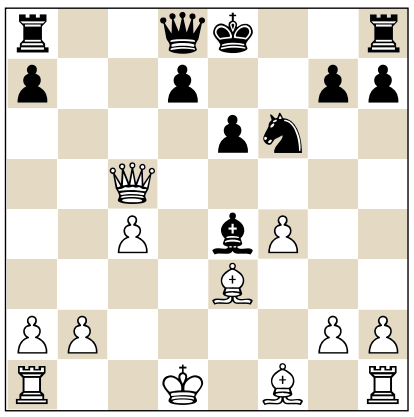
This move, with the intention of taking the king to e2, was first played in Timman-Ligterink, Amsterdam 1979, in a game in the Dutch League that never found its way into the database.
10...♗b4+ 11.♔e2 f5 12.exf6 ♘xf6 13.♗e3



13...♕d8
Ligterink played 13...♕a5, which was also common for a while. But then White can swap on f6, after which the white king is safer than the black one.
14.♘d6+ ♗xd6 15.♕xd6 ♗b7
Remarkably enough, Vidit had had this position earlier this year with White. In Vidit-Krasenkow, Wijk aan Zee 2018, he was better after 15...♕e7 16.♗c5 and won quickly (see New In Chess 2018/2, p.47). The text was first played in Svidler-Leko, Yerevan 2001.



16.♔d1 This was also Svidler's choice. The plan is to develop the king's bishop as quickly as possible. An important alternative was 16.♖d1, as in Karjakin-Yu Yangyi, Baku 2015. After 16...♖c8 17.g4 c5 18.♖g1 Vidit had probably planned 18...♖c6 (instead of Yu Yangyi's 18...♖f8). It is important for Black to castle as soon as possible. 19.♕e5 0-0 leads to a sharp position with chances for both sides.
16...c5! This pawn sac was introduced by Radjabov.
17.♕xc5 ♗e4
The point of the pawn sacrifice. Black centralizes his bishop, followed by chasing the queen with ...d7-d6 and castling. He has compensation, because the white king continues to be exposed.



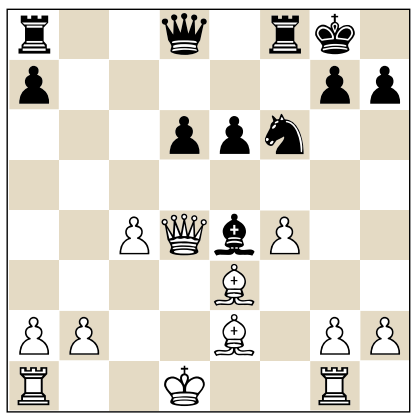
18.♖g1
A novelty. 18.♗e2 used to be played here. Afterwards, Tari said that he had planned to advance his g-pawn, but then realized this would not quite work. The text is not bad, by the way,

LARS OA HEDLUND

As five rounds leave no time to warm up, local favourite Nils Grandelius showed his ambitions right from the first game.

since the g-pawn eventually needs to be protected anyway.

18...d6 19.♕d4 0-0 20.♗e2

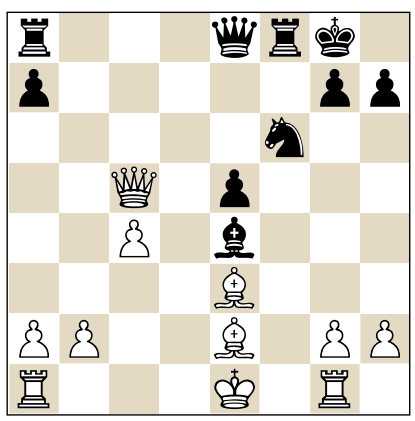


20...♕e8

Black could have developed his queen to different squares, but the text looks like the most logical choice, because it will allow the queen to get to square g6.

21.♔e1 e5 22.fxe5 dxe5 23.♕c5

The best square for the queen.

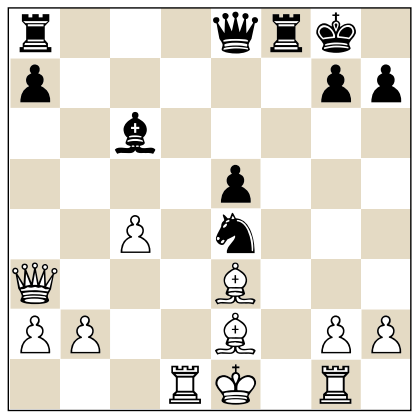


23...♗c6

With this retreat, Black vacates square e4 for the knight, but this plan is rather on the slow side.

Correct was 23...♘h5, intending 24.g3 ♖c8 25.♕a5 ♗f3!, and after the bishop swap Black gets play on the dark squares.

24.♖d1 ♘e4 25.♕a3



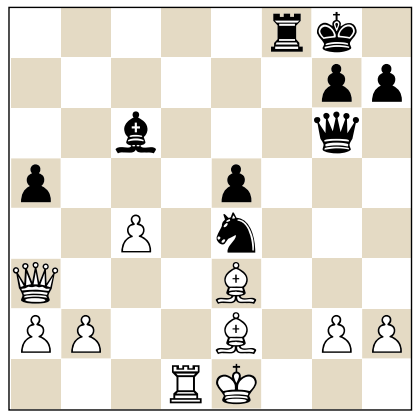
25...a5

With 25...♕g6, Black could have maintained his pressure on the white position, but then White can get his majority moving with 26.b4. After 26...♕f6 he has the defensive move 27.g3, nipping a possible black attack in the bud.

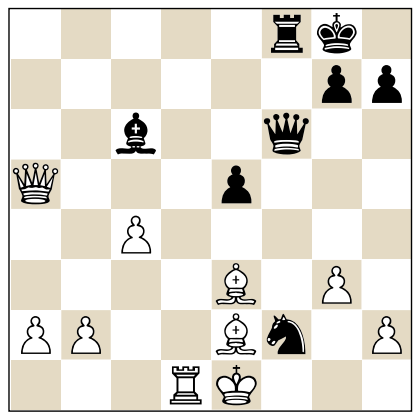
26.♖f1

An important move. White swaps rooks to relieve the pressure on his position.

26...♕g6 27.♖xf8+ ♖xf8



28.♗f3 28.g3 would have been stronger, but this was hard to calculate over the board, because after 28...♕f6 29.♕xa5 ♘f2



ANALYSIS DIAGRAM

he would have had to find the unlikely 30.♖a1!, which stops the black offensive. The main variation continues as follows: 30...♘g4 31.♗c5 ♖a8 32.♕b6 ♘xh2 33.♖d1, with a considerable advantage for White.

SUBSCRIBE NOW!

Are you not yet a subscriber to New In Chess? Give it a try! Take out a subscription today on the premier chess magazine in the world, and receive 8 issues a year. New In Chess Digital is available for iPhone, iPad and Android.

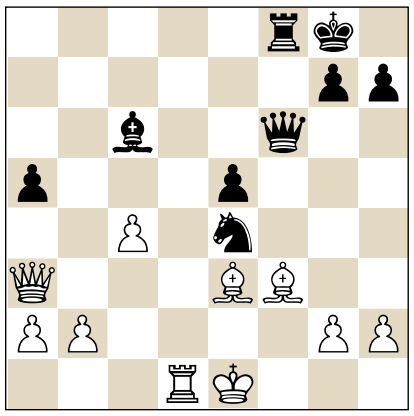
NEW IN CHESS		EUROPE	U.S.A. Canada Mexico	REST OF WORLD
1 year (8 issues)	print or digital	€89.99	US$ 99.99	€89.99
1 years (8 issues)	print and digital	€109.99	US$ 119.99	€109.99
3 years (24 issues)	print or digital	€249.99	US$ 279.99	€249.99
3 years (24 issues)	print and digital	€299.99	US$ 329.99	€299.99

SUBSCRIBE DIRECTLY AT WWW.NEWINCHESS.COM

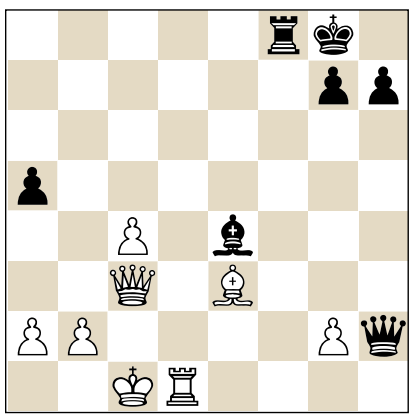
New In Chess, P.O. Box 1093, 1810 KB Alkmaar, The Netherlands.
Phone: 0031-(0)72 512 7137, nic@newinchess.com

USA and Canada only:
Land of Chess, 336 Hazel Ave #131,
Glencoe IL 60022, nic@newinchess.com

28...♕f6



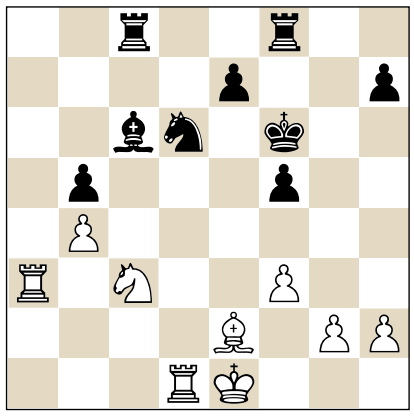
29.♕d3
This cautious queen move leads to a draw almost by force. It was still possible to capture the a-pawn. After 29.♕xa5 ♕h4+ 30.♔e2 ♘f6 31.♖d8 ♗xf3+ 32.gxf3 ♕xc4+ 33.♔d2 White has winning chances, his majority being slightly stronger than Black's.
29...♕h4+ 30.♔e2 ♘c3+
Vidit is going for the win. With 30...♖xf3 31.gxf3 ♕xh2+ 32.♔e1 ♕g3+ he could have forced a draw.
31.♕xc3 e4 The point of the previous move. Black wins back the piece.
32.♗xe4 ♗xe4 33.♔d2 ♕xh2 34.♔c1



After many delays, White has finally managed to castle queenside. His king is safe, but his material plus has gone.
34...♕xg2 35.♖g1 ♖f1+ 36.♖xf1 ♕xf1+ 37.♔d2 ♕g2+ 38.♔e1 ♕h1+ 39.♔d2 ♕g2+ 40.♔e1 h5 41.♕xa5 ♕h1+ 42.♔d2 ♕g2+ 43.♔e1 ♕h1+ 44.♔d2 ♕g2+
Draw.

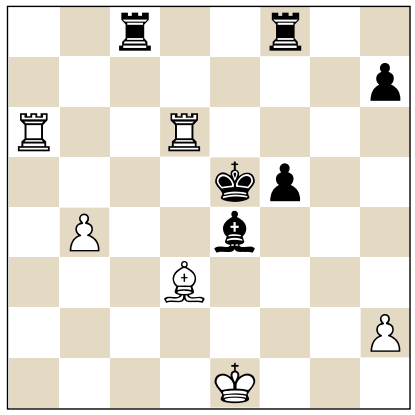
In Round 3, Nils Grandelius beat Linus Johansson, taking the sole lead. Vidit and Morozevich had drawn their first three games, and during their personal encounter in Round 4, they seemed to be going to add another draw to their tallies. But then, Morozevich suddenly lost his bearings.

Alexander Morozevich
Vidit Gujrathi
Malmö 2018 (4)

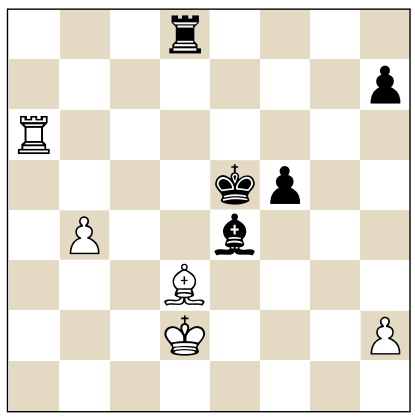


position after 24...♔xf6

The position is equal. White can play his king to f2, for example. Instead, he plays an inaccurate move:
25.♖a6 A winning attempt? Now Black gets a chance to secure a comfortable endgame.
25...♗xf3 26.♘xb5 ♗xg2 27.♘xd6 exd6 28.♖dxd6+ ♔e5
Objectively speaking, the position is still equal, but White has to be careful now.
29.♗d3 ♗e4



30.♔d2 Another inaccuracy. After 30.b5 or 30.♖e6+ everything would have been fine. **30...♖cd8 31.♖xd8?** The decisive error. It is actually very strange that a player with Morozevich's experience should voluntarily expose himself to such a deadly pin. After 31.♖e6+ ♔f4 32.♖ad6 he would have had nothing to fear. **31...♖xd8**



32.♖a3? This loses at once. But the intermediate check 32.♖a5+ would not have saved him either. The rook ending is lost after 32...♔f4 33.♖a3 ♔f3 34.b5 f4 35.b6 ♔g2 36.♖b3 ♗xd3 37.♖xd3 ♖b8 38.♖d4 f3 39.♖g4+ ♔f1 40.♖b4 ♖b7, and the f-pawn decides. **32...f4** Eventually winning a piece. **33.♔e2 f3+ 34.♔e3 ♗xd3 35.♖xd3 f2!** An elegant final move. White resigned.

Malmö 2018 **cat. XV**

					1	2	3	4	5	6		TPR
1	**Vidit Gujrathi**	IGM	IND	2707	*	½	½	1	½	1	3½	2747
	Nils Grandelius	IGM	SWE	2651	½	*	½	½	1	1	3½	2758
3	**Aryan Tari**	IGM	NOR	2603	½	½	*	½	½	1	3	2691
4	**Alexander Morozevich**	IGM	RUS	2665	0	½	½	*	½	½	2	2534
5	**Benjamin Gledura**	IGM	HUN	2615	½	0	½	½	*	½	2	2544
6	**Linus Johansson**	IM	SWE	2457	0	0	0	½	½	*	1	2408

Going into the final round, Grandelius sported a half-point lead over Tari and Vidit. Grandelius took no risks against Morozevich, and after 33 moves they signed the peace. At this point, Tari had already drawn with Gledura after a sharp Grünfeld Indian.

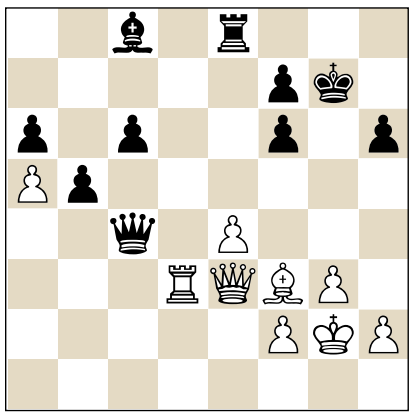
On paper, Vidit had the easiest pairing, but it took him a long time

LARS OA HEDLUND

For top-seed Vidit Gujrathi there was no other option but first place. Thanks to a last-round win the Indian managed to catch up with Grandelius to share the spoils.

to create any advantage. In the time-trouble phase, he took dangerous risks, but in the end his courage was rewarded.

Vidit Gujrathi
Linus Johansson
Malmö 2018 (5)



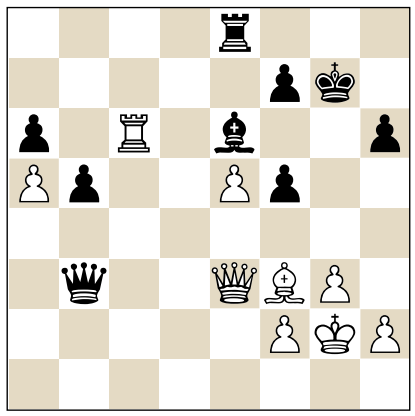
position after 35...♔g7

36.♖d6 An ambitious move that could have saddled White with quite a dubious position. After 36.♖c3 things would have been equal, e.g. 36...♕e6 37.♕b6 ♕h3+ 38.♔g1 ♕d7 39.♖xc6 ♖e6, and after the rook swap neither player can go for the win.

36...♗e6 Panic. The f6-pawn was not yet under attack. He could safely have continued with 36...b4. Only after 37.♕f4 would he have had to go 37...♗e6. Black has excellent chances.

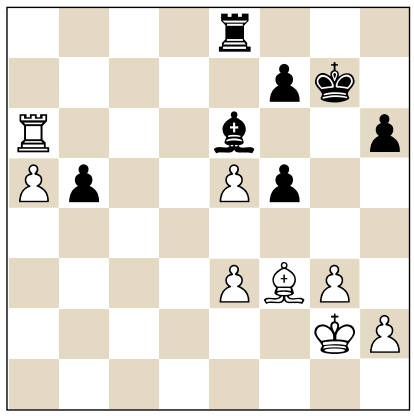
37.e5 f5 A typical time-trouble move. With 37...fxe5 38.♕xe5+ ♔g8 Black could have preserved the balance.

38.♖xc6 ♕b3
But this is certainly the best defence. By swapping the queens Black should just about manage to save his skin.

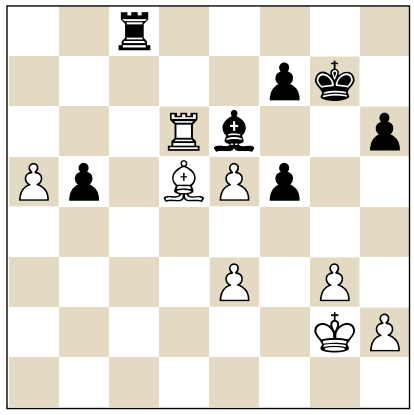


39.♖xa6 Despite Black's errors, it is hard for White to create a decisive advantage. The alternative was 39.♕xb3 ♗xb3 40.♖xa6, but the problem is that after 40...♖xe5 41.♖b6 ♗c4 42.a6 ♖e1, the white pawn cannot continue in view of a devastating check on f1. Vidit must have seen this in spite of his time-trouble. The drawback of the text is that it slightly unbalances the white structure.

39...♕xe3 40.fxe3



40...♖d8 More accurate was 40...♖c8, intending to penetrate via c2. After 41.♖b6 ♖c2+ 42.♔g1 ♗c4 43.a6 ♖a2 White cannot really make progress. **41.♖d6 ♖c8 42.♗d5** White could also have kept the bishops on the board, but this would have led to a drawn bishop ending almost by force: 42.♗b7 ♖c2+ 43.♔f3 ♖a2 44.a6 b4 45.♖b6 b3 46.e4 b2 47.exf5 ♗xf5 48.♖xb2 ♖xb2 49.a7 ♖a2 50.a8♕ ♖xa8 51.♗xa8 f6, and there's nothing more to be done.



42...b4 A mysterious move that loses on the spot. After 42...♗xd5+ 43.♖xd5 ♖c2+ 44.♔f3 ♖xh2 45.♖xb5 ♖a2, White would have been unable to make progress. **43.♗xe6 fxe6 44.♖xe6 ♖a8 45.a6 b3 46.♖b6 b2 47.♖xb2 ♖xa6 48.♔f3 ♖a4 49.♖b7+ ♔g6 50.♖b6+ ♔g5 51.h4+ ♔h5 52.♖f6 ♖f4+ 53.gxf4** Black resigned.

So at the very end, Vidit managed to grab his share of first place. To live up to his name, he couldn't really have afforded to get away with less. There was no tie-break, because in Malmö that has never been part of the tradition. ■

Just Checking

Daniil Dubov

CURRENT ELO: 2696

DATE OF BIRTH: April 18, 1996

PLACE OF BIRTH: Moscow, Russia

PLACE OF RESIDENCE: Moscow, Russia

What is your favourite city?
Moscow, where I have a lot of friends. And I like cities with an embankment, such as Tel-Aviv, Barcelona and Cannes, where I can walk for hours.

What was the last great meal you had?
At my birthday party recently. I will not name the restaurant, because I don't want it to become popular ☺. You can always find a good steak there, which is more than enough for me.

What drink brings a smile to your face?
Whiskey. And a few glasses of still water if I want to get my boring face back.

Which book would you give to a friend?
Andre Agassi's *Open*. A good book that also contains a lot that applies to chess.

What book is currently on your bedside table?
Kasparov on Kasparov, part III (in Russian) and Diego Torres' *The Special One* about Mourinho.

What is your all-time favourite movie?
I actually prefer books to movies. But I liked *Rush* a lot.

And your favourite TV series?
... and I prefer movies to series.

Do you have a favourite actor?
Christian Bale. I'm really impressed with the way he prepares his roles.

And a favourite actress?
Scarlett Johansson. You can guess the reason.

What music are you currently listening to?
Mostly Russian rap. I almost never leave home without earphones.

Is there a work of art that moves you?
I often get inspired by architecture. There was a TED talk about how the buildings around us are what we associate ourselves with. I believe it's correct.

Who is your favourite chess player of all time?
Viktor Kortchnoi. Fighting till the very end, lots of creative ideas and an interesting person himself.

Is there a chess book that had a profound influence on you?
All Kasparov's books. He is one of the two persons who were the main reason of my progress. The other one is my friend Boris Gelfand. There are no words to describe how grateful I am.

What was your best result ever?
Probably 3rd place at the World Blitz in Qatar with all the top guys participating.

And the best game you played?
My game against Yu Yangyi (2016) would definitely be my best game if I had managed to convert my advantage.

What is your favourite square?
A puzzling question. I'll choose c4.

What are chess players particularly good at (except for chess)?
After hundreds of games with a lots of mistakes and perfect ideas it's much easier to push yourself to take big decisions. And we are less nervous doing it, I guess.

Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, or?
Facebook for chatting. Sometimes Instagram. If you don't want to sleep yet but reading is already hard, you are still capable of swiping photos.

Who do you follow on Twitter?
I don't have Twitter at all.

Who or what would you like to be if you weren't yourself?
Probably the guys who follow the cameras in elevators can tell a big number of funny stories – I'd try this kind of work.

Which three people would you like to invite for dinner?
Bobby Fischer, Françoise Sagan and Edward Snowden.

What is the best piece of advice you were ever given?
Even if you are alone, you can be right. And all the rest of the world can be wrong.

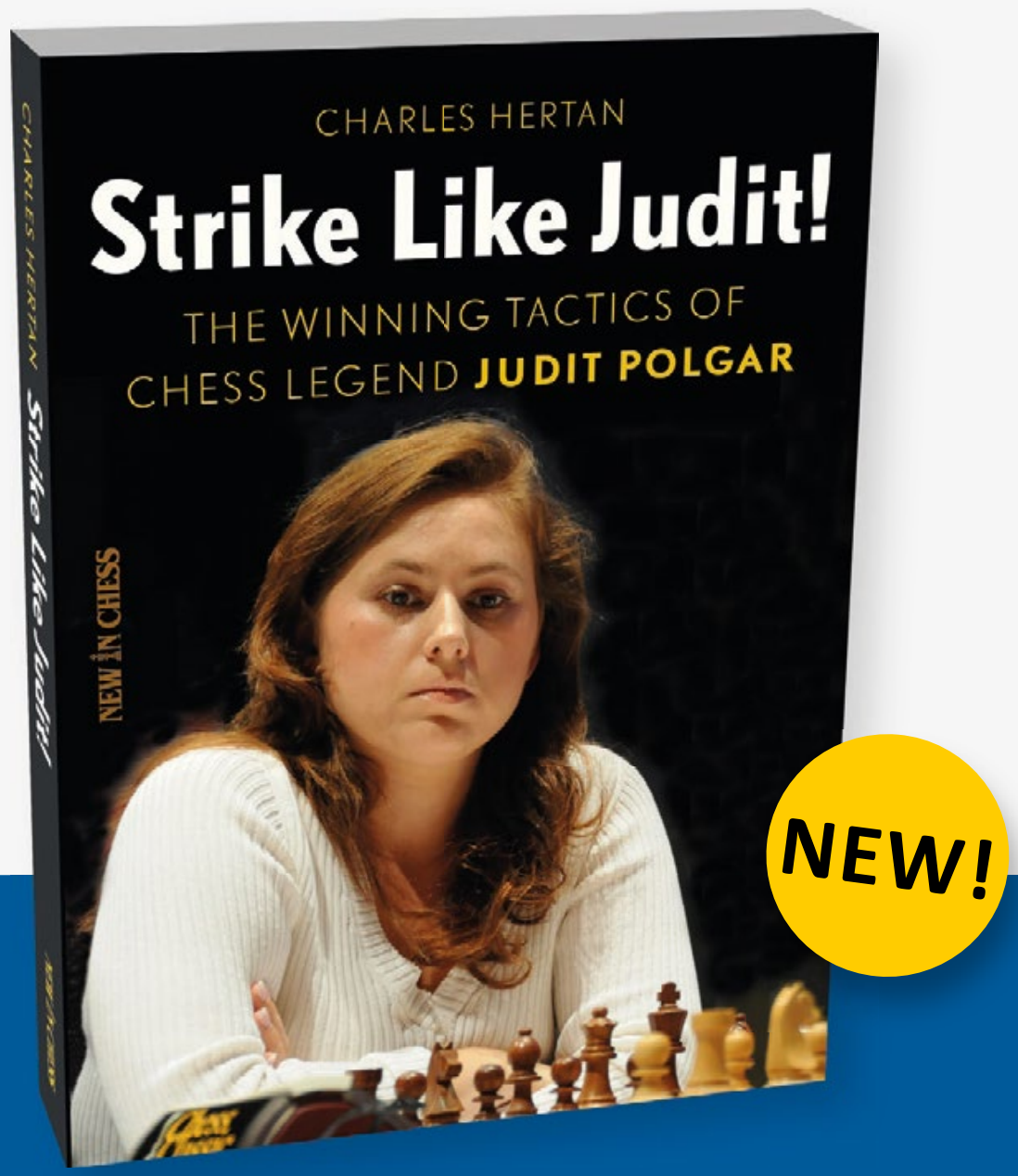
Is there something you'd love to learn?
It would be nice to play the piano.

Where is your favourite place in the world?
One of my favourite feelings is to get off a plane in Moscow. So maybe the plane stairs in Moscow.

And your greatest regret?
I should have started following my intuition much earlier. You feel much better making your own mistake than making a mistake by following somebody's opinion.

What is the best thing that was ever said about chess?
Chess is beautiful enough to waste your life for – Hans Ree.

Learn from her killer moves



To reach the 8th spot in the FIDE World Rankings and belong to the very best for many years, as Judit Polgar did, you obviously have to be a brilliant all-round chess player. Still, she will be first and foremost remembered for her attacking skills. Her electrifying combinations and tactical strokes of genius set her apart.

Award-winning author Charles Hertan has selected Judit Polgar's best and most instructive tactics. They are arranged by theme and presented with helpful explanations and lots of practical advice. You will be inspired by her clever traps, stunning sacrifices and cunning endgame tricks. You will learn from her calculating skills and counter-intuitive ideas.

paperback | 256 pages | €24.95 | available at your local (chess)bookseller or at newinchess.com | a NEW IN CHESS publication

Chess at ICC

The best online chess experience there is.
Clean, brilliant & smart. *iOS and Android*

Chess Videos
Every Russian Schoolboy Knows: Easy Come Easy Go - A story of Modern Opening Preparation - part 4
Improve Your Chess: Tactical R&P Endgame
World Championship Match - Game 10
World Championship Match - Game 9
Attack with LarryC: Back to the Future!
Seek Graph
02:36
02:35
GM Alex Yermolinsky

Download on the App Store

ICC
chessclub.com